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# NEW ZEALAND.

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

first Session of the Binth Parliament.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

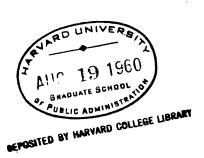
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OCTOBER 23 TO NOVEMBER 10, 1884.



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### NEW ZEALAND.

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

## First Session of the Ninth Parliament.

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, 23rd October, 1884.

First Readings—Third Readings—Hares—East and West Coast (Middle Island) and Nelson Railway Bill.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

#### FIRST READINGS.

Fisheries Conservation Bill, Waikato Confiscated Land Bill, Drainage of Mines Bill, Supreme Court Registrar (Taranaki) Empowering Bill, Public Works Bill, Government Insurance Association Bill.

#### THIRD READINGS.

Animals Protection Bill, Sheep Bill, Kowai Domain Board Empowering Bill, Thames Recreation Reserve Sale Bill, Tauranga School Site Bill,

#### HARES

The Hon. Mr. WIGLEY desired, without notice, to ask the Colonial Secretary a question on a matter of urgency. A few weeks ago the Council passed an Act prohibiting the importa-tion of hares into the Chatham Islands, because there were no hares there at that time; and he thought the same course might be pursued in reference to the parts of this colony into which hares had not been introduced. He had learned that yesterday a box of hares was brought up in the "Hawea," consigned to the Acclimatization Society of New Plymouth, for the purpose of being turned out in that district. He desired to ask the Colonial Secretary if any steps would be taken to prohibit the society from turning the hares out. The hares would, in the opinion of some honourable members, do great harm in the district, as they destroyed all cabbages where they existed. He wished to know if the Hon. the Colonial Secretary would take steps to prevent these obnoxious animals being turned loose in the district.

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The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY had heard of the box of hares being sent to that district to be distributed, but, in consequence of the speech of the honourable member, probably it would be only with a view to punishing the animals.

EAST AND WEST COAST (MIDDLE ISLAND) AND NELSON RAILWAY BILL.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Sir, in moving the second reading of this Bill, I feel that - were it not that I should be violating the rules of this Council in referring to a previous debate, in which insinuations of a certain character in reference to intimidation and pressure of some sort in regard to votes, were flung at the heads of honourable members-I should perhaps be in a position to say something of a not very satisfactory character to certain honourable gentlemen; but, as I am precluded from any reference to a past debate, I must not allude to what otherwise I could say of a character which would not be satisfactory to those gentlemen. I regret to be obliged to say so much; but there is a matter which I cannot pass over without alluding to it in very plain language. Intimidation of a very peculiar character has been offered to my-self by an honourable gentleman who sits in this Chamber, who yesterday, as I was on my way to this chamber, stopped me in a very rude manner, and said—I took his words down at the time—"I wish to inform you that I will vote against every measure introduced by the Government until a petition which I presented to the Government, asking for relief from fines imposed on me, has been decided by the Executive." This honourable gentleman yesterday informed me that such was his intended mode of action. I might have brought this forward as a breach of privilege; and were I some fifty years older it might have been a case not of breach of privilege, but of a breach of the peace. If it is any satisfaction to the honourable gentleman to know it, I may inform him that the Government have.

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decided not to remit the penalties, and therefore he is at liberty to vote as he thinks proper. It will be in the recollection of honourable members in this Council that, when the public works scheme was inaugurated, a line such as is indicated in the present Bill was contemplated; but, in view of the pressure that was brought to bear to get branch railways constructed, it was impossible to carry out the scheme in the manner in which it was first intended to be carried out. Now, the object of the present Bill is to give power to construct a railway of this character without burdening the colony in any way. Honourable members will find, in a *precis* which was printed and circulated some time ago, the distinctions be-tween the present Bill and "The Railways Construction and Land Act, 1881." That précis gives the fullest explanation on that point. Honourable members on a former occasion suggested that I did not sufficiently explain a Bill of some importance then before the Council. will now explain, as far as I can, the intended object of this measure. The preamble pretty well shows the general object, and the provisions I will explain as shortly as I can. The preamble states, "it is desirable to give further facilities for the construction by private enterprise, and for the working, of a line of railway to connect the east and west coasts of the Middle Island, and of a junction therefrom to Nelson." Now, if honourable members will Now, if honourable members will refer to section 4 they will find that the Governor is empowered to contract with a company or companies for constructing railways of the character indicated in this Bill, and the terms are of such a nature as to impose no burden on the country. While this Bill ostensibly affords a great deal of power to give land to the company, it would be scarcely fair to any company that I should speak of the quality of the land. I am not in a position to say anything about it from personal knowledge; all I know of it is from hearsay; and I think it would be unfair for any one occupying my position in this Council to make any reference to the value or the worthlessness of the land in question. The quantity of land to be given will be subject to the scrutiny of the Legisla-tive Assembly—which I understand to mean both branches of the Legislature-so that, notwithstanding the fact of passing this Bill, we should still have an opportunity of dealing with the question of the land. The mode in which it is proposed to deal with this land is of a very simple character. The land for fifteen miles on each side of the intended line is to be surveyed into blocks, and every alternate block is to be given to the company. But before any grant can be issued to the company the Minister for Public Works has to satisfy himself that the railway, or a section of it, is fit for traffic; and the value of the land given is not to be estimated at less than 10s. an acre. This Bill contains the usual borrowing powers; but not such borrowing powers as are referred to in an Act which seems to give some offence to he nourable members. The borrowing powers are not the same as in the Railways

Construction Act, but of a special character, and will in no way whatever burden the colony. I have made inquiry into the character of this district, and I find that the miners are greatly restricted, from the want of facilities of communication, in carrying on their industry; and, when we consider that ten and a half million pounds' worth of gold has been taken out of the West Coast country, I do not think too much is being asked in asking for the concessions suggested in this Bill. The rest of the Bill is of a mere machinery character, and will have to be dealt with in Committee; and, as I understand this is not a money Bill, it can, in Committee, be amended if thought desirable. I therefore suggest to honourable members the desirability of allowing this Bill to pass the second reading. May I be permitted, occupying the position I do here, to make a suggestion to this Council? Notwithstanding the fact that I know the feeling with regard to other matters, the Council may pardon me if I make a suggestion. Honourable members will admit that I have never sought to obtrude myself or my views upon the Council; but at the same time I think they will pardon my suggestion that there is another branch of the Legislature which has very strong views on this question; and I think it would be only fair, out of deference to their views and to the views of the country, that the feeling which seems to have existed in this Council, and which cannot be ignored, should not have any place in regard to this Bill. Sir, I beg to move the second read-

ing of the Bill.
The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—This Bill is of such a speculative nature that I am very much surprised that two gentlemen so cautious and circumspect as the representatives of the Government in this Chamber should have introduced it for the consideration of the Council. I think that when this Bill is fully considered it will be found to bristle with difficulties all over it, and, if carried into effect, be the cause of endless litigation; and I am quite certain that it can be demonstrated beyond all doubt that it is before its time. In clause 5 power is given to take over and work the railway in consideration of receiving a portion of the gross traffic receipts. Now, when the Bill was introduced in another place a limit was fixed. I think, for the purpose of argument, it will be better to read this clause in a positive rather than a negative sense, for the clause of course means that the colony shall give to the company a proportion of the gross annual receipts when the railway is taken over. That is the simple meaning of the clause. In the Bill as first introduced the limit was fixed at 30 or 35 per cent.; but this clause makes no limit. Under it, it appears to me, the Government may arrange to give almost any portion they like of receipts. I think that is a very great objection. I do not think any agreement of that kind ought to be made. Well, then, we come to the question of the land. Now, by the 8th clause, land is to be given to a distance not exceeding fifteen miles on each side of the line. Then follows, at the end of the clause, a proviso

Hon. Mr. P. A. Buckley

that you can give land on one side of the line if Therefore there is not sufficient on both sides. you can, under the second part of the clause, push the boundary of the land to be given to any extent you like. That is quite clear. But the first objection I have to this clause is that the land is not there. The Colonial Secretary said it was unfair to talk about the value of the land. Why, it is notorious—if there is one thing better known than another throughout the length and breadth of the colony it is -that the land along the line of this proposed railway is of very small value indeed: of such small value that we all know, as a matter of fact, it will never be taken up by a syndicate. If a syndicate is formed to make this railway, that is not the land they will take. They will take it from another part of the colony, and not along the line of the railway. Here is a statement of the extent and value of the Crown land available for cession for fifteen miles on each side of the proposed line of railway over the whole length.

East and West Coast

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Will the honourable member say where he got his infor-

mation from?

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—It is furnished by a gentleman well acquainted with the subject. I give the figures for what they are worth, and the honourable gentleman can controvert them if he likes. The following are the figures:—

Bush land (level), at £1 per acre ... Barren mountain, at 10s. per acre Fair pastoral, at 12s. 6d. per acre

Acres. £
192,000 192,000
230,400 115,200
40,220 24,640
76,800 48,000
548,480 379,840

That is a quantity of land worth £379,840; but the company require land worth £750,000, and I think there can be very little doubt indeed that, if this Bill is ever carried out, they will have to resort to subsection (2) of clause 9 under which it is provided that, if the land adjoining the line is not sufficient, the company can take other land which, in the opinion of the Governor in Council, would be specially benefited by the construction of the line. Of course we cannot tell where that is to end. I think it would not be very difficult to show that the land all round the main line pretty well from Dunedin to Canterbury would be specially benefited, if this line were ever made and run at a profit. There is another great objection to this allocation of land under this Bill. The richest gold field in the country may be given to this company.

The Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL.—And why not? The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—"And why not?" the honourable gentleman says. One would think that the honourable gentleman was not acquainted with the whole spirit of our legislation in regard to the gold fields. The whole spirit of our legislation in regard to the gold fields. The whole spirit of our legislation has been not to part with the gold fields; and of course, if such a thing were to happen as that we gave a gold field to this company, you would have no end of claims brought against you, and you would

be forced to buy back the gold field at a ruinous rate.

The Hon. Colonel BRETT. — So much the better.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—"So much the better!"

The Hon. Colonel BRETT. — Yes, for the company.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—Yes; but honourable members will understand that it is our duty to protect the colony. We are here to look after the colony, if we can. Then, under subsection (3) of clause 9, no land is to be deemed to be of less value than 10s. per acre. Now, it appears to me that this is a most extraordinary state of affairs. To begin with, you say you are going to give the company land worth £750,000, and you say, first, that they shall take it along the line, and then you say that no land shall be deemed to be worth less than 10s. per acre. That seems to me most ridiculous. We know that the greater part of the land along the proposed line is worth nothing like 10s. per acre. That complicates the whole thing, to my mind, immensely, and it makes it very probable, if a company is once formed under this Act, that you will have claims raised against the colony that you will find it very difficult to resist. We know very well by past experience how difficult it is to put these matters in such a way that there will be no claims brought against the colony. What, for instance, did we have in the Brogdens' case? We passed a special clause to provide that, unless claims against the colony were brought within a given time, they could not be brought forward at all. One would have thought that there could be nothing more final: yet look at the difficulty the colony had in getting out of that case. Honourable gentlemen acquainted with the whole of that subject know perfectly well that the colony was much nearer being let in for a considerable payment on account of those claims than the public at large think. I think, Sir, that, if we are going to give this company any privileges, it would be far better to give them cash right out. I would much sooner say, "We will give you £500,000 or £750,000," or whatever it may be, "and there is an end of it." I do not like all these complicated clauses, which, it seems to me, conflict with one another. First, you say you are going to give the land; then that it shall be estimated at such a price; then you absolutely fix a limit within which the land must be: and yet all the time you know that the land is not there. We know it as well as we know anything that the land is not there, and that you will have to take it away from other parts of the colony. Well, then, in addition to all this, we are going to give away any coal found on the land to the company without their paying royalty. I do not know why we should give that at all. It is certainly a stretch of liberality to which I should take exception myself. Well, now, I think it would be instructive if we were to refer to some of the opinions which have been expressed by the Commission appointed to inquire into the proposed routes for an East and West

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Coast Railway. In this report it is stated: "The total population of the West Coast, including Westport, is returned as 24,214; and reference to the decennial return proves it has been stationary since 1872." Well, the Hon. the Colonial Secretary said that miners could not subsist there except at great cost, and that we had taken so much gold out of the West Coast, and so on. That may be all very true; but I do not think that would justify a colony like this - looking to our financial position-in undertaking a railway which will certainly not be made for less than a couple of millions of money, merely to support twentyfour thousand people, who are not increasing, and who live in a district where the population has remained stationary for the last ten years. Then, the report goes on to talk about the climate. It says that it is quite unsuitable for raising grain. Well, I think we know that pretty well. The report also says that the cost of reclaiming the ground is about £50 per acre. There can be scarcely any population subsisting there by agricultural or pastoral pursuits; so that, whatever plea there may be for this railway on the ground of mining industry or any other industry of that kind, there can be none whatever on the ground of agricultural or pastoral pursuits. Well, now, on page 12 I find these words. I am taking some of the remarks in the report applying to the general question. I shall refer presently to what is here upon special questions. I find here, on page 12, that they say,

"It would be manifestly unfair to provide the community settled in Christchurch with cheap coal and timber at the cost of the taxpayer living elsewhere, and an unsound policy to interfere with industries already in full operation by bringing others into existence through the aid of carriage unremunerative to the

State."

Of course they there refer specially to the coal found in the Malvern Hills and in the vicinity of Christchurch. The report goes on

"We urge most strongly that a survey of the forest lands and coal-bearing country of the West Coast be also made, so that, instead of falling into the hands of speculators, they may become a source of wealth to the colony, as

well as revenue for the railway."

And it finishes with these words: "and the most sanguine view we can take is that there is no prospect of the traffic paying more than working expenses—full interest on the cost is not to be hoped for." Well, having said so much about the Bill itself and the opinion of the Commissioners on the whole subject, let us for a moment inquire what is the nature of the railway itself. We have seen that we are going to give away land worth £750,000; that we may, under the Bill, make a contract to take it over, work it, and give-any portion I was going to say, but we will say—a portion of the annual gross receipts of the line to the company; that we may part with the richest gold field, for all we know, in the colony; that all the coal is to be worked without paying

any royalty, if there is coal found; and that the land they are to get is to be valued at its present cost, and not at its prospective value. I do not attach so much importance to this last provision, because I do not think they will get very much land along the line. However, this is what we are to give. Now, what are we to get? The evidence shows that this railway, as we all know, will traverse the most difficult country, I will not say in New Zealand, but I think that this is about as rough country as a line could well go through. The evidence shows that it will cost £2,040,000. There will be about twenty-two tunnels on the line, and one of them is no less than 3 miles 161 chains in length. I believe that is the top one. The grade for eighteen miles will be 1 in 50; and it must be remembered that there are many sharp curves of 7½ chains radius, which I believe any practical engineer will tell you has the effect of greatly increasing the traction-power necessary, and will make the grade of 1 in 50 practically as much as 1 in 40. The first engineers in the world—and the Hon. Mr. Richmond is here to say if I am incorrect—state that a rise of 100ft. in a mile is equal to four miles of extra haulage on the level ground. Now, these eighteen miles, with a grade of 1 in 50, at that rate will need a traction-power—if that be the right expression equal to something like seventy miles extra haulage; and of course that is an immensely important fact in examining the evidence given before the Commissioners, and in view of the whole question of this railway with regard to the cost of it. There is another great objection that I have to this Bill, and it is that it does not provide that any specifications are to be submitted to the colonial engineers, and, for all we know, the whole of this work may be most carelessly and indifferently done, and when the colony takes it over I suppose we shall be very much astonished to find that we have to expend immense sums of money in repairs, and that the work has been thoroughly "slummed:" in fact, that it was the object of the company to make the railway as cheaply as possible, and then to push it off on to the colony. It is estimated that the maintenance of this line will be about £385 a mile—that is to say, that the mere maintenance will cost the colony, whenever it takes it over, about £40,000 a year. honourable members will refer to this evidence, I contend they will see that, even on the most favourable estimate, it is not expected that the railway will do more than make the receipts balance the expenditure. I will read what was said about that in Mr. Maxwell's evidence. He says, "I have the honour to furnish you with an estimate of the revenue and cost of working the new line of railway on the data supplied by you." This is a letter from Mr. Maxwell, the Genoral Manager of New Zealand Rail-ways, to the Chairman of the West Coast Railway Commission, which is included in this

report:—
"The estimated cost of working arrived at is £120,000. The bulk of the traffic indicatedviz., coal, sheep, &c. - being carried at rates

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which are unremunerative, leads to the inference that, under the conditions stated, the line would probably not pay; but, with increas-

ing traffic, it would no doubt do so."

I will show directly that you can expect to do nothing of the kind-you cannot expect to bring the produce for the same rates on this railway as elsewhere; there is no chance of it, none whatever. The passenger traffic is put down at ten thousand a year, while the evidence here shows that the passenger traffic by coach is about eight hundred persons at present. Now I come to a very important matter. What is to make this railway pay at all? Well, of course we know that there are practically two things only that can make it pay, if it is to pay for many years to come, and those are coal and timber. Now, with regard to coal, I should like to read Mr. Bach's evidence as to this route. And, first, I would say that it is pretty well known that there is not any true coal on the east side of the range, and therefore any coal which the railway may bring from the east side of the range will simply help to crush the local industries existing at the present time. By bringing another sort of brown coal into Christchurch, where you have plenty of that sort of coal in all directions, you will only interfere with the coal mines—which do pretty well, or some of which do pretty well—on the East Coast. I think, so far as that goes, the railway in that case would do more harm than good. Then comes the question, What about your true coal? Of course it would be wrong to say that there is not a strong probability of a good coal mine being found somewhere on the west side of the range: that is, I suppose, a likely thing to happen; but, then, you have got to show that this coal can be brought by this railway at a remunerative rate, and that it will be able to compete with the sea-borne coal. Now, I would just like to read what Mr. Bach says upon this subject. Mr. Bach is, I think, the General Traffic Manager at Christchurch. Well, one question is, "What, then, would be the cost of bringing coal from the West Coast by rail, say, 176 miles?" That I believe to be the distance from Brunnerton to Christchurch, but am not sure. The answer is, "12s. 8d. per ton." The examination proceeded,-

"These are your regular tariff rates?—Yes.
"Would that rate be affected by the grade?—
That is our general rate: there are exceptions
ander which special rates are made. Between
Malvern and Christchurch we have, I believe,
rates which work out 12d. per ton per mile.
On the Rimutaka they make an extra charge
for the grade. The figure I have quoted is the

ordinary tariff rate."

Honourable members will therefore see that, if what I have stated about the grades, and so on, is true—and I have no doubt it is, for I believe I am perfectly well informed on the subject in that respect—these tariff rates could not at all be taken as representing the cost of haulage from the other side of the range, and that it would be very much more than 12s. 8d. Well, he was here asked, for instance,—

"What would the rate per ton per mile be for a distance of fifty miles?—Practically, it runs out 12d. The rates are nearly equal: on 100 miles, 10s. 2d.; and 150 miles, 11s. 10d. These are the ordinary tariff rates."

Well, the ordinary tariff rates would not do, unless you were to work it at a dead loss. Mr.

Bach states,-

"There is another important factor in striking a rate for the West Coast—namely, we should have to send empty trucks to bring the coal down. Double haulage would have to be taken into consideration."

So that not only should we have to pay the higher rate in question in consequence of the long incline, but double haulage has got to be taken into consideration. Now, regarding the question of sea-carriage he says, "I think, where we carry 100 tons by rail"—that is between Dunedin and Christchurch—"1,000 tons would be carried by sea." That is, ten times the quantity would be carried by sea as against rail carriage.

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN.—Of coal, or of

general merchandise?

The Hon. Mr. MILLER. — Of "tons." I have read from what he says of "tons."

"Are you competent to form an opinion whether the goods imported to Lyttelton would go again by sea to the West Coast?—In the case of valuable goods they probably would be sent by rail, because there would be less risk and a saving of time. I do not think such an article as cement would be sent by rail. Timaru is a risky harbour, and yet nearly all goods between Lyttelton and Timaru go by sea."

The railway between Christchurch and Timaru is a dead level—I suppose one of the best lines in that respect you can find in any country—and yet nearly all the goods go by sea.

try—and yet nearly all the goods go by sea.

"They cannot look at the rates by rail"—this is still Mr. Bach. "Timaru is served by merchants almost entirely by sea. I do not think the railway can compete with water-carriage. I think Timaru is a very good instance of that."

I think that is pretty good evidence that, when this railway comes to try and compete with the water-carriage in bringing coal from the other side of the range, it will be beaten clean out of the market. It has been said, and is referred to in this report, that what applies to Dunedin and Christchurch—so far as the relative rates between the railway and seacarriage are concerned—will not apply to Westport or Greymouth, because the harbours there are so bad. Well, I can only say this: that we have got Bills coming up concerning these harbours, and I think it would be a false position to take up to suppose that these harbours will not be made. Whatever we may do now, I am perfectly certain that this colony will never pursue such a ridiculous and narrowminded dog-in-the-manger policy as to allow the limitless resources of superior coal which exist upon the West Coast to lie undeveloped for the sake of the money which may be necessary to improve those harbours.

The Hon. Captain FRASER. — I rise to a point of order. I think the question before us is the East and West Coast Railway.

The Hon. the SPEAKER.—The honourable

member is not out of order.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—I am keeping strictly to the point, because I am showing that sea-borne coal from the West Coast will beat this carriage by rail altogether. I was peat this carriage by rail altogether. I was going to say that no such policy as that can possibly be adopted by the colony, because you would simply drive the whole of the coal monopoly into Newcastle, and then your refrigeration would go to the winds. The very life of the colony at the present time depends upon your refrigerating your meat, and it is a question of the utmost nicety how cheaply you can carry your meat carcages to the great you can carry your meat carcases to the great markets of the Old World; and, if you do not develop your coal, which Nature has given you in unlimited quantities, well, you will deserve to perish: that is all. Now with regard to the question of timber. There is no doubt whatever that there is timber. The report and everything else goes to show that there is an enormous quantity of timber there; but of what kind is it? You have got three kinds of pine—I do not know the native names—black, red, and white pine; and no doubt a great quantity of black-birch, which it is stated is a very valuable timber. I am not acquainted with it; but I know what the white-birch is very well, for I have put in plenty of posts of white-birch, and have had the pleasure of seeing them rot about eighteen months afterwards. I am told that the black-birch is a very good timber. I believe black-birch would do for sleepers; but this must be always remembered: that there is no kauri and no totara on the West Coast-there is nothing but pine—and therefore the trade in the other kinds of timber will always remain just the same; you cannot drive kauri and totars out of the market. And there is another thing to be considered, and here comes the sea-carriage again -whether the sea-borne timber from Nelson and other parts of the colony will not always compete with you successfully. I understand that Nelson timber is being put into Lyttelton now at 10s. a hundred. No doubt there is some good building stone on the route of the railway —there is evidence of that; but we need not discuss that—it is not worth it. I will not take up the time of the Council much longer. I will merely say, with regard to the Nelson Railway, that the railway referred to in this measure has no more to do with Nelson than a railway in Kamschatka. The railway from Arthur's Pass to Brunnerton has nothing to do with it—it will never be of the slightest use to Nelson as a trunk line; and as to the Putaruru and Rotorua Railway, that, I believe, is quite independent of this scheme; and therefore I need not refer to them. What I desire to say, then, before I sit down, is that I have endeavoured to look at this from every point of view, and that I am one of those who will always support enterprise where I think it can be shown to be of a proper character. And I

quite appreciate the enterprise of the Canterbury people. No doubt they have shown great enterprise in former times: for instance, in piercing the Lyttelton hills they have shown immense enterprise, and deserve great credit for it. But in this case what I contend is this: that no man can show that this railway can possibly be made to pay at present. connect a population such as there is now on the West Coast—and which has been stationary for the past ten years - with Canterbury does not, in my opinion, justify the colony in going to such an expenditure as this. As surely as we encourage a syndicate to take up this railway, so surely shall we involve ourselves in an annual heavy loss. Are we in a condition to do that? The honourable gentleman who has moved the Bill says it is in order to save the colony from being burdened. Why, Sir, it is this very work which will burden the colony. It is ten, fifteen, or twenty years too soon; and I say it is the duty of this Council to pause and consider its position, without reference to any influences whatsoever. We live in days when powerful communities com-bine together and insist upon their views being carried out by the Government of the day. But we in this Council have to remember that we represent the whole colony-we do not represent any particular portion or portions of the colony only; and the question for us to consider is, Have we got a right to make the whole colony bear the burden which I think I have conclusively demonstrated will undoubtedly be placed upon it by the construction of this line? It is not possible that this line can be made to pay expenses for a long time to come; and I say again that this Council will be wanting in the performance of its duty if it does not take a firm stand and say, "We will resist this measure, feeling certain that it will impose an extra burden on the colony which it is not able to bear." It appears to me that, if we do not take some such stand on an important occasion like this, we shall simply proclaim to the world that we are ready to submit to any financial dictatorship which springs up here; and I say, Sir, without any fear of being contradicted, that this colony is now subjected to financial dictatorship. the immense desire of having money expended in different parts of the colony without reference to the reproductiveness of the proposed work that very often causes measures like this to be placed before us; and, disagreeable and ungrateful as the task may be, I think we should refuse our sanction to this measure, if we have any real love for New Zealand, for our own home-for we, mind you, who have children here and have made our homes here, shall feel these burdens when these speculators have passed away; we shall know what it is to have plunged into these gigantic schemes, making railways over rough mountains and across precipitous gullies, down enormous steeps, with tremendous curves and gradients that the Old World would laugh at, and for a population of 24,000 persons at the present moment; we, who live in this colony, I say, shall realize

what it is to have passed measures like this twenty years before the time. And when we have passed away, when works like this are undertaken and are producing nothing to the country in reality, not developing any industry perhaps beyond a little mining, I say that those who come after us will have good right to say that we refused to do our duty as legislators because we were afraid of the influences that were at work. Those are my views. would desire to assist Canterbury as much as-I was going to say, more than—any other part of the colony, for all my predilections tend in that direction: scores and scores of my friends are in that part of the country, and I regard it with the greatest amount of interest, and would abstain on every possible occasion from doing it the slightest injury. I would do everything I could to promote the interests of Canterbury; but I do not think I am called upon to vote for a Bill like this, which I am certain will impose a large burden upon the colony. I think that if I took any other view I should be unworthy of my position in the Council; and I therefore beg to move, as an amendment, That this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE.—Sir, the honourable gentleman has made a very powerful appeal to the Council, as he invariably does when his heart is in his work. I have to tell the honourable gentleman, however, that he is not alone in desiring to retain the independence and dignity of this Council, and it is quite possible to take a different view from that which he has advanced without in any way going back from those feelings. I looked with the greatest suspicion upon this Bill when first introduced to Parliament. But this Bill is not the Bill as then introduced. I supported the District Railways Bill when first it appeared, on the ground that we had no right to put obstacles in the way of private enterprise: simply because we might think it would not pay the colony to undertake certain works, we had no right to bar the way to the enterprise of private people. The only thing to consider was, whether or not under that Bill we were quite safe from what has now happened—the doors of the Council being besieged by dissatisfied speculators; and we thought that, by the provisions that we put into that Act, we had made it absolutely certain that those who chose to speculate in district railways would have to stand or fall by their own speculations. That has not proved to be the case. However, I intend to vote for the second reading of this Bill, because I think a certain amount of deference ought to be paid to the feeling manifested in another place, and also to the wishes of persons who are prepared to speculate at their own risk; and, so long as the colony is not made responsible, I think it is excessively bad policy to insist on people only doing this or that as the colony may choose to allow them. There is a great deal too much work, that should be left to be undertaken by private enterprise, in the hands of the Government already; and any enterprise like the present,

if it is carried out entirely at the risk and with the capital of private persons-not necessarily and not probably local people in this case—ought not to be met with too hard criticism; and we should not attempt to force down the throats of those people our opinions, which they may not share. All that we have to do is to caution them that all is not gold that glitters. We have sent a Royal Commission to examine the matter, and they have collected an immense volume of evidence, which the projectors of this line can read as well as we can; and, at a meeting held in Christchurch, it was reported, by persons chosen from among themselves, that the work would not pay private individuals, but that it might be done by the Government. And, after the debate in another Chamber, and after what is likely to be said here has been added to that, I think we have done all we need do to warn persons who may wish to speculate in this work. It remains now to protect ourselves and the colony; and we should take care that there is no word, from the first line to the last, in the Bill that does not make it as clear as possible that the colony will not take any share I am not satisfied that or risk in it whatever. all the clauses in this Bill are as clear on this point as I could wish.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Section 12. The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE.—I am aware of that. The honourable gentleman tells me that clause 12 will do it, Sir; but I do not think that is quite sufficient. Then, I ask, why not let the syndicate have right out a certain quantity of land on either side of the line—say, for ten miles alongside each side of the railway, if you like? but let us eliminate from this Bill the provision about the selection of land elsewhere, so that there may be no dispute about it afterwards. If we are going to give them the coal, it will be a very great source of wealth to them. I believe, from informa-tion I have received, that there are some very valuable coal mines on the western side of the ranges, and that coal can be delivered in Dunedin for 5s, per ton cheaper by the railway than by sea. That must be taken, of course, for what it is worth; but all my information tends in the same way. Sir, I think it very probable there may be some trouble in carrying out this Bill. There may be some trouble about this question of land, and it may also be necessary, as has been suggested by the Hon. Mr. Miller, to impose some provision with a view to seeing that the railway is properly built, and conducted in such a way as to be compatible with the safety of the public. Then, I think a large portion of the Bill could be advantageously left out. We have nothing to do with the manner in which they borrow the money. The precaution to which I have alluded, with the object of preventing their coming down on the country afterwards to take over the liability, is not wholly met by the clause which has been mentioned. I think we ought further to provide that every share, every debenture, and every official document of that kind shall bear a distinct announcement that

responsibility of any kind is unshared by the Government, and that, come what will, the Government of New Zealand will take no responsibility for anything. I think that is reasonable, and I have no doubt that some person better versed in drawing up such documents than I am will be able to devise some way of doing that. The Hon. Mr. Miller has asked, Why not give in cash a certain amount equal to a bonus? I should think that the answer was obvious enough.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER. - I said I would

rather give it.

The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE.—Yes; but you cannot do that. Why should we give money for a speculation which a Royal Commission, and the people of Christchurch in meeting assembled, and every authority on the sub-ject, say is one which, from a romunerative point of view, it is not desirable to go into? Why should we give them £500,000 for a bonus? No; I would rather carry out the principle advocated by Mr. Curtis—at the time Super-intendent of Nelson—who proposed to unite Nelson Province by railway to the West Coast. He said, "We will give you so many acres of land: we do not say that the land is good, but you may have it for what it is worth. The land itself is not much, but it contains undoubted mineral resources, and, if you think it worth while to speculate, there it is for you." That is the principle on which this Bill ought to go. I would not limit it to a quarter, or a half, or a full million of acres, so long as the land adjoined the railway, and there was no likelihood of any dispute with the Government as to whether they had got their full quota, or any question left on which they might afterwards come down on the colony. All the information we have got with regard to the land in question is that it is not suitable for settlement, but that it possesses mineral wealth. I hope we shall strike out every clause which in any way throws the responsibility on the Government; and, recognizing, Sir, that the most objectionable provisions have been eliminated from this Bill, I shall not oppose the second reading, though I shall endeavour to effect several amendments in Committee.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Sir, my honourable friend the Colonial Secretary, in making his speech, introduced into his opening remarks a reference to an act of intimida-

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—No, no. The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—He also told us, in his closing observations, in carefully-guarded expressions, that we should do well to bear in mind that if we threw out this Bill we might incur the wrath of the other branch of the Legislature. Now, I was very sorry to hear my honourable friend the Colonial Secretary making the remarks he did in reference to the Hon. Mr. Pharazyn; and for this reason: that, in reporting private conversations to the Council, it is of the utmost importance that we should have all the circumstances connected with the conversation before us: otherwise we may arrive at very

Hon, Sir G. S. Whitmore

false conclusions as regards what was meant. And, if I wanted any illustration of this, I might refer to a little circumstance that occurred about the same time. After the debate that took place here the other day in reference to the District Railways Bill, I proceeded to the lobby, when my honourable friend Mr. Reynolds—and I am glad to be able to speak of him as my honourable friend, in spite of what I am about to narrate—came up to me and, shaking his fist in my face, said, "I will tell you what it is: we will make you swallow the Bill, whether you like it or not." As I state it, this was a distinct threat—a distinct act of intimidation. But I know that my honourable friend did not mean all that he expressed, and that, when he was shaking his fist in my face, he was only using that oratorical emphasis with which he marks his utterances at times. I have seen him do the same thing in the Legislature.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—The conversation to which I have referred was not of a private character; it was conducted so openly and glaringly that I was bound to take notice

oi it.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—The conversation I have alluded to was not of a private character.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—Oh, yes, it

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Persons should not always take these matters literally. I always thought my honourable friend Mr. Buckley was capable of understanding a joke: I knew he was not a Scotchman, but he has not appreciated this joke in the spirit that he ought to have done. That the Hon. Mr. Pharazyn intended taking no such action as that indicated by the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, is evident from the fact that, prior to the opening of the House, he came to me and said. "Have you seen the East and West Coast Railway Bill? Do you not think it is in a shape in which we might pass it?" I am very sorry that the Hon. Mr. Buckley should have reported the conversation, though I rejoice at the very virtuous decision at which the Government have unanimously arrived on this subject. Then, my honourable friend wound up his remarks by something which, to some weak-kneed brethren, might appear to be an act of intimidation on his He told us that we must bear in mind that there was another branch of the Legislature with a very strong feeling on this subject. If that meant anything whatever, did it not mean that we must be careful not to arouse their susceptibilities too much, or we should be called upon to "pay the piper"? Now, there is another branch of the Legislature besides this, with very strong feelings, and I think, in our discussions, it is well that we should bear that in mind; but it is equally desir-able that that other branch of the Legislature should remember that there is a Legislative Council likewise, which has also its own strong feelings. And I think, if they look at the thing calmly and disinterestedly, they will be apt to arrive at the conclusion that the feelings

that animate the Council in these matters are likely to be much more disinterested-much more unbiassed by party or local considerations -than those they are moved by themselves. I have had the honour of being a member of this Council for fifteen years, and I think I can bear witness to this: We have very often failed in doing our duty, but never failed in doing our duty except in giving way too much to what we believed to be the desire of the other branch of the Legislature; and I am sure, if any honourable gentleman looks back on his votes, and considers them dispassionately, he will blame himself, not for those he has given in opposition to the known wishes of the other branch of the Legislature, but for those he has given in a contrary direction, and often in opposition to his own opinions and convictions. These remarks were called forth by what the Hon. Mr. Buckley said. And now, in respect to this Bill, I am bound to say there is much in it which I entirely disapprove. But, looking at the matter in all lights, I have arrived at the conclusion that I should best fulfil my duty by recording my vote in its favour, although subject to certain modifications being made in it before being finally adopted. In its present shape I cannot support the Bill. I do not wish to make any lengthened remarks on the subject, but I base my objection to the measure entirely on the 5th clause. In the 5th clause of the Bill there is a distinct power given to enter into an engagement, on the completion of the railway, for the working of the railway, the Government to retain a certain specified portion of the receipts. Now, Sir, as the Bill was originally introduced, it was the in-tention of the Government that for the first year 70 per cent. of the gross receipts should be taken by the Government for the working of the railway, and that in subsequent years the amount to be retained by the Government should be 65 per cent. of the gross receipts. Now, it is in this clause that a great liability to abuse is contained. My honourable friend Mr. Buckley has stated that it is the intention to proceed to build this railway without burdening the colony in any way, and he emphasized those remarks further by remarking that it was the intention of this Bill not to impose any burden on the country. So far, I agree with him, and, if the Bill would only attain what he says it is the intention of the Government it should attain, I would cheerfully go with him and vote with him; but this clause goes far beyond that. We have heard, in the document read by the Hon. Mr. Miller, a report from Mr. Maxwell, which is contained in the appendix to the report of the Commission last year upon this railway, that the working expenses of this line immediately on its opening will be not less than £120,000. On the other hand, we have a direct report that, under the most favourable circumstances, it is not likely that the railway will pay more than working expenses. Under these circumstances, if the Government enter into such an arrangement as they are at liberty to do under this clausesuch an arrangement as was indicated by the

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Colonial Treasurer in introducing the Bill into Parliament—we may, through the operation of this Bill, be subjecting the colony to a yearly payment of something like £40,000.

An Hon. Member.—Or more.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—It may be more. I wish honourable members to distinctly understand that, if the Bill is passed in its present shape, there is a possibility of the colony involving itself in a liability of £40,000 a year at least. I cannot agree to the Bill in its present shape, on that account; and, if I agree to the second reading of the Bill, it is only with the intention of moving, when in Committee, the erasure of that clause. At the present time the Government work private railways without any specific authority being given, and there is no reason why they should not work this railway in the same way. But to enter into an arrangement before the contract is made, and before we have acquired any experience as to the working of the line, that a certain proportion of the receipts shall, under any circumstances, however great the loss may be, go to the contractor for the railway, is a proceeding which would show a great want of prudence on our part. I may say that I am greatly influenced in the course I intend to adopt in reference to this Bill by the belief that the Bill may be instrumental to a very considerable extent in developing the West Coast. It is true that the population on the West Coast for some years has been in a state of decline; but doubtless one cause of that is to be found in the fact that there has not been great freedom of communication with other parts of the colony, and particularly in the fact that the cost of living there has been unduly great. But, if this railway were made, no doubt the cost of living on the West Coast would be reduced to very nearly the same rates as prevail in other parts of the Middle Island, and there would be such facilities of communication as would enable many people to go there and make themselves acquainted with the condition of things prevailing in that portion of the colony. I cannot but believe that the effect would be to check the present decline of population there, and even possibly to impart a considerable progress to that part of the country. I see that great advantage may result from it, and I shall be cheerfully a party to making this railway if it can be done on the safe conditions which are supposed to be the basis of the Bill. To that extent I am prepared to go; but I do take a decided stand on the 5th clause, and I cannot be a party to giving the Government power to enter into a contract which may involve the colony in a very large annual outlay.

The Hon. Dr. GRACE.—I do not know that it would be at all necessary to emphasize the importance of clause 5 of the Bill, after the very lucid explanation of the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse; but I draw attention to the fact that the law is to be read as it is printed, and must be interpreted as it is written, and under this clause it is quite clear that, whatever was intended, it is perfectly possible for the Go-

vernor in Council to make a contract in advance, and by that contract to bind the colony to work the railway for 30 per cent. of the gross receipts, giving the balance of the gross earnings as a bonus to a company, and this without being subject to revision by Parliament. Therefore it is only necessary for the Governor in Council, under that clause, to agree to work that line for 30 per cent. of the gross receipts, and the colony would be bound to it. Now, that is a power that cannot have been meant to be given, but it is given by this clause, and I am sure the Council will never overlook such a clause as that. The Hon. Sir George Whitmore has stated that he is willing to support this Bill because there is no partnership under it, such as an agreement for 2 per cont. and so on, as in the partnership under the District Railways Act; but I wish to draw attention to the fact that the partnership under this clause is much more important than any in the District Railways Act, because it is indefinite. Now, I look with the greatest suspicion upon this clause, because I perceive that clause 14 of the Rail-ways Construction and Land Act is left out of the Bill. That clause distinctly provided that contracts made for the construction of railways under the provisions of the Act should be subject to the revision of Parliament. But under this Bill there is no possible means by which Parliament can revise any contract which the Governor in Council may enter into with the company to make a line. I assume that is a power which no member of this Council would give to the Governor in Council, and I assume also that that is not a fair responsibility to put into the hands of a representative Ministry. There is something more. There is the expense necessarily entailed on the colony in paying half the cost of the survey of these large tracts of land. The amount necessary to pay half the cost of survey of blocks of land in that sort of country would be something very considerable. Under the Railways Construction Act a power was given to the Governor in Council to complete a contract with a company to the extent of sanctioning the survey of lines, and so on; but the final contract could only be entered into subject to the revision of Parliament. I do not want to go into the general question of the wealth - producing character of these works. My own conviction is, and always has been, that you can only stimulate prosperity and create fresh wealth in this country by the introduction of people. If one-half the money we are proposing to spend, directly or in-directly, on these works, were spent on the introduction of people, the works would very soon recommend themselves more favourably to our consideration than they do now. What we want is this: We want consumers, so that we may have contributors to our revenue. It is a well-known fact that in the colony no man need go without food, if he chooses to work; it is an equally well-known fact that any one man can produce food enough for half a dozen men. Under these circumstances, what the country wants is fresh people; and I must affirm that the construction of these works by

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a syndicate will not do much for the prosperity of the country, but the failure of the venture may bring us into further disrepute in England. I have nothing more to say, except that I shall do everything I can that I believe will tend to the general prosperity of the colony, irrespective of locality.

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—Sir, about three days ago I told the Hon. the Colonial Secretary that I was sorry I could not support this measure; but, since I have heard what has been said by the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse, I may say that I feel I can allow this Bill to pass its second reading, but that, if this objectionable clause 5 is not altered in Committee, I shall reserve to myself the right of voting against

the third reading of the Bill.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND.—Sir, I wish to say a very few words on this matter, and, first, to express my general protest against the style of legislation of which this Bill is an example. There is one view of the case which always strikes me as of great importance, which is that, in inviting people to undertake works of this kind, we should be at least convinced beforehand that there is something like a probability that, with good management, they will be successful. We have heard a good deal about syndicates, and some people say there is a syndicate now in existence somewhere or other in the colony to undertake this work. For my own part I am still doubtful whether that syndicate is not in the position of the mythical Mrs. Harris. "Syndicate" is a term of modern invention, and, as I understand it, it means a laying of heads together, by certain people who understand the manipulation of the money-market, to bring about some scheme in which those not understanding the movements of the money-market may be induced to invest their capital. These syndicates, I may say, used to go by a much more humble name. They were called "promoters," and promoters were people who, whatever became of the scheme, succeeded in "sucking thereout no small advantage." Now, syndicates, or promoters, or whatever they may be called, can well enough look after themselves. I have no particular desire to protect them. The members of syndicates are persons who enter into their particular line of business with their eyes very wide open, their eye-teeth cut, and who do not want any one to protect them. Any syndicate who might propose to take up this line would read, and probably have read, the report of the Railway Commission and the evidence of Mr. Maxwell, and all matters brought to light in connection with this pro-posal. The honourable member who has preceded me tells us that he expects that this scheme will be constructed at the cost, "pro-bably, not of local people." Well, if they were local people my objection would be of less force, for they have the means of knowing the merits of the case; but really, in all probability, those who go into this scheme will be mostly persons outside the colony. And this is the proper place to mention a particular defect in this Bill, if we pass it as it stands. It does not

Hon. Dr. Grace



make any sort of provision by which a proportion shall be established between the de-benture debt and the subscribed capital. That is a thing which, in the ordinary interest of the money-lending people, and in justice to our own character as a people and as a Legislature, we ought to provide for. I believe with the Hon. Sir George Whitmore that the colony should take no risk in this matter. We have been reminded already that the same ambition, the same desire, as is expressed in this Bill was shown when the District Railways Act was passed; and now we have been told that we ought to have abolished that Act, and we have been reproved severely for imposing the burdens caused by that Act, and for undertaking to pay liabilities which no one when that Act was passed believed would fall on the colony. That is most astonishingly inconsistent with the proposal to pass this measure. At the very same time that we are proposing to go into a scheme which is both wilder and much less well-considered than the district railways scheme, and with all sorts of provisions which must involve us in difficulties, we are abolishing privately-owned railways—we are asked to buy up the lines already made under the District Railways Act. I do not think it is necessary to go much into detail as to the probable profitableness or otherwise of this line, but I cannot refrain from contributing my mite to the general information on the subject. The question has been raised as to the competition between sea-carriage and carriage by this railway in the transport of coal. I do not pretend to be able to speak with authority as to what would be the cost of carrying coal over Arthur's Pass; but I am quite sure that, if haulage costs 13d. per ton per mile on the level line from Christchurch southward, it will cost at least double that to carry it over Arthur's Pass. It is a very moderate estimate to say that it will cost at least double; probably it will cost a great deal more than that. The approved scheme to go over the pass is, I believe, to ascend to a great height to avoid the greater expense of a tunnel, which would have to be a long one, because the pass is flat, and, as the ground is largely made up of slides from the mountains, a tunnel would require to go very far into the side of the mountains to be sure of having good ground. There is a proposal to use the water-power provided by the head-water of the Bea-ley, to balance the loads mounting the pass. This plan would save much in cost of construction, but the cost of working would be increased. As a rule, where special machinery has to be used in the working of a railway it is attended with extra expense. Referring to the value of the land, as far as my knowledge goes, when you fairly enter into the mountains on the eastern side, when you have fairly got into the Waimakariri Valley, it is all mountain. There is no land whatever on the Canterbury side of the range fit for any cultivation, and the greater part of it is not fit to carry many sheep. The grass is sparse, and the timber is rugged, and not, I think, of a kind

available for market. The other side - with which, I dare say, many honourable members are as well acquainted as I am—is blessed with mineral wealth, and cursed with one of the most unfavourable of climates for agriculture that could be, except one where there was frost and snow. I am assured by those who have resided there for a long period that the grass in that part of the country is not able tostand the continual moisture of the climate, but that it fades and dies on that account, The Hon. Mr. Lahmann will correct me if I am wrong in this; but so I have been assured by residents on the Coast. That being so, by residents on the Coast. That being so, you will not get ordinary settlers there, and you must therefore depend on coal, gold, and timber for all the traffic you will have on this railway. My own belief is that coal will, in the main, be carried by sea. If we make those West Coast harbours and this railway, we are repeating our previous history. We made a railway from Christchurch to Dunedin, and then we constructed two harbours along its course; and now we are told in this very debate that those harbours take the whole goods transport from the railway. That was not unforeseen; it was pressed on the promoters of these great schemes in 1870: but deaf ears were turned to that warning, and probably deaf earswill be turned to a like warning now. But my main objection to the Bill is this: As has been stated, we are in duty bound, as honourable men, not to put our stamp on any scheme that does not give a reasonable chance of profit to anybody except the money-jobbing men. That is my great objection to this Bill, and I hold that, as honest men, we ought not to ignore that consideration.

The Hon. Mr. REEVES. - Sir, before the debate closes I should like to say a few words with regard to the second reading of this Bill. I should like first to address myself to some remarks made by my honourable friend Mr. Miller, who moved that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. My honourable friend made a most lugubrious speech, which filled me with the deepest feelings of depression. He will pardon me perhaps if I allude to the fact that some years ago I had the honour of being a colleague of his in the Government, and I know that then his ideas on such subjects were remarkably different from those he has expressed to-day. In those days, instead of looking on questions affecting the progress of the colony, such as public works of importance, with suspicion and alarm, and styling them speculations unworthy of being introduced by the members of the Government. my honourable friend, if I remember rightly, was in favour of those works. His arguments then were on the other side, and very different: and then, when we were met with all we have heard to-day and a great deal more; when leading statesmen—who are now enjoying their well-earned reputation at Home—actually stated in another place that they would pack up their carpetbags and go out of the colony if the works were proceeded with, because ruin would stare the colony in the face - I think then

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my honourable friend held different views from those that we have heard from him to-day. My honourable friend made a most unhappy allusion, I think, to the work of the tunnel through the Lyttelton hills. I remember the commencement of that work, and I well remember when the late Mr. Moorhouse, who was actively engaged in pushing it through, and worked at it for many years, used to say that he had all the talent of the place against him. And so he had. All the talent of Canterbury was against him, and it was said the tunnel was to ruin Canterbury; it was to bring ruin to Canterbury, and involve our descendants in unheard-of liabilities. But what did the tunnel do for Canterbury? It made the whole line of railway, I may say, from Lyttelton to Port Chalmers, for, without it, it would have been impossible to carry the traffic. What do we see now? The returns of that line are from £55,000 to £70,000 a month. But, more than that, it has enabled the whole stretch of that country to be populated with farmers, who, though not very thriving just now, will yet be thriving, and who will leave to their children a splendid inheritance. All the arguments we have heard to-day were used at the commencement of what is known as the immigration and public works policy. They were all threshed out then over and over again. It used to be said the whole colony was to be ruined. But what do we see now? From the date of the commencement of that policy in 1871 or 1872 the population has increased threefold; and, in spite of three seasons of great drawbacks, when Nature has been very unkind to the farmer, when money has been dear, and prices of our chief products have steadily fallen, we are a long way from ruin yet. The scheme we are now asked to sanction is one of exactly the same nature as that about which such gloomy predictions were There are a hundred thousand hardworking, industrious, intelligent men on one side of the Island. On the other side there are twenty thousand still left, in spite of there being no means of communication with the opposite side. I ask the Council to read this Bill a second time, because, if this work is carried out, exactly the same results will follow in the course of time as have followed the construction of the tunnel through the hills of Lyttelton and the railway from Lyttelton to Port Chalmers. We have on the one side of the Island a large population of food-producers seeking markets for their produce, and there is known beyond a doubt to be on the other side a large area of comparatively unprospected and unknown mineral country, which will support a large, an increasingly large, working population. A population of a hundred thousand industrious, hard-working, enterprising people on the east side of the range is asking to be connected, for the purposes of commerce, with a population on the other side of the range, which, though now unfortunately reduced to about twenty-four thousand, is capable, from the undeveloped resources of that district, of being augmented, by the aid of this railway communication, to considerably over what it

was in the flush of the gold fields. It appears to me that an opportunity has now arrived for doing so under the most favourable circumstances. We are told, and, I believe, upon good foundation, that a company of English capitalists is prepared to find the money for this railway, in return for certain privileges to be granted. If we look at the neighbouring colonies we see that the example which was set by this colony some ten years ago has been followed with increasing vigour ever since. In this very evening's paper I see that, owing to the large amount of unemployed capital in England, it is stated that the last New South Wales loan is being paid up largely under discount. The Legislative Assembly in New South Wales, ready to take advantage of these circumstances, voted only yesterday supplementary estimates for public works to the amount of £1,000,000. And, turning to another colony-Western Australia-we find, from the same paper, that a London syndicate is prepared to execute a railway from some place named Bangaree to some other unknown place. Why should we colonists of New Zealand, the possessors of perhaps the most favoured colony in the whole world, hesitate to avail ourselves of such opportunities, when a colony like Western Australia is only too happy to do so, and when the larger colonies of Australia are eager to make railways to open up their country? I think we should be failing in our duty to this colony and to our fellow-colonists if we hesitated for one moment to do all that is in our power to avail ourselves of these opportunities. So far from agreeing with my honourable friend Mr. Richmond on the question of this system of making our railways through the aid of syndicates, and on a system of land grants, I believe most thoroughly that this colony has made a fatal mistake in not from the very first adopting that system. What is it that we want before everything in this colony? Capital and labour. And what more likely way can we find of introducing capital and labour than by this process? If a company undertake to make this railway on these terms, is it likely that they will allow their lands to remain idle? It is of first necessity for them to introduce population and to settle it upon the land. If we look to a much larger country, and one that has carried out its system of railway-making with astonishing rapidity, what do we find? The United States from first to last has made its railways on this principle, and made them most successfully, and it has settled the country at the same time that it made its railways. I confess that I feel astonished when I find the proposition received by honourable members in this Council, with a few exceptions, with alarm and suspicion. To me it seems an opportunity that we should gladly avail ourselves of, and do our utmost to bring to a successful issue. We are told—and I am informed this is one of the main objections to this proposal—that it will in the end involve us in unknown liabilities, which will last through our lifetime and descend to our children. The Hon. Mr. Miller, who, I am sorry to say, is not in his place, was

Hon. Mr. Reeves

very eloquent on this subject, and adduced the [ case of Messrs. Brogden as an instance in point. I read that case from an entirely opposite point of view, and it brings me to an entirely oppo-site conclusion. I was one of those who took a part in framing the Act alluded to by my honourable friend, and had several interviews with the Judges on the subject. That Act was framed so as to make it as binding as pos-sible, and it had the effect which was desired. But what I would point out as the real difference—and this is a point that has never been alluded to, so far as I am aware—is this: We are told that the same result which followed — the result which is now before the Parliament in the case of the District Railways Act—will be sure to follow here. I see no analogy in the cases at all. What is the history of the pressure that is brought to bear under the District Railways Act? That pressure owes its strength to the fact that the settlers are colonists who possess political power, and that the disappointed capitalists—the unfortunate capitalists, who find themselves now in rather an unpleasant position—are possessed of equal, if not a greater amount of, political power. If we were dealing with a foreign company, that element would not enter into our consideration. The pressure that they will be able to bring to bear will be nothing more than enough to obtain that justice which I am sure, this colony will never refuse to any company or any individual who may advance money for public works under the safeguard of the laws of the colony. I think that disposes of the question entirely. I shall not take up the time of this Council; I shall not follow the example of some honourable members, and enter into a discussion upon the different clauses of the Bill. We are now, I assume, discussing the question whether it shall be read a second time. An opportunity will be offered to go into these clauses minutely and severally, and I shall reserve what I have to say on these questions for that occasion.

All I would urge now upon the Council is this: Although honourable members are not directly responsible to the people of the colony, they feel, I am sure, as earnestly desirous to do justice to all parts of the colony as if they occupied a different position. Well, there are, as I have said, a hundred and thirty thousand of the people of this colony who are, almost entirely, ardently desirous that this great work should be done. They have toiled and laboured in obtaining information; they have done every-thing that men could do to prepare the way for this work. They include amongst them some of the most able business men on both sides of the range; and their opinions are, I humbly submit, entitled to grave consideration. I would ask this Council, in their interest, not to obstruct this measure, but to give it a second reading now; and, further than that, not to strangle it hereafter in Committee. would also ask, in the name of my honourable friend who is absent, who has declared himself to be ardently—most ardently—attached to Canterbury, that they will save him from him-

self, and not allow his name to go down to posterity as the mover of the motion which strangled this Bill.

[COUNCIL.]

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.-Sir, I think the Council has listened with very great pleasure to the speech which has been delivered by the honourable gentleman, and has reason to congratulate itself upon the accession to its numbers of a gentleman possessing large colo-nial experience, great political knowledge, and, as we have seen, a capacity of defending in this Council with ability and eloquence any cause which he takes up. But I think that his friends, amongst whom I venture to number myself, have cause to regret that, as an oratorical débutant in this Council, he was not more fortunate in his theme. The honourable gentleman stormed the positionthe strong position—which my honourable friend who has moved the amendment to this resolution took up on this question, by pointing to what had occurred in the early days of the colony, when the railway system in Canterbury was about being initiated; and he pointed, as a warning to the opponents of this measure, to the obloquy which subsequent events have caused to fall upon the wise men of that day, as they thought themselves, who put themselves in opposition to the making of the tunnel which now forms part of the Canterbury railways. But to make a comparison between the two projects is hardly fair, the conditions are so extremely dissimilar, The making of a tunnel through the Port Hills, to give the people of Christchurch and of the whole Province of Canterbury access to the only port within their limits, was a project of an extremely different character from that which the inhabitants of Canterbury are now which the inhabitants of Canterbury are now urging us to sanction—that of giving them access to a population not of twenty-four thousand, as my honourable friend says, on the West Coast, but, I am sorry to say, to a population very much smaller than that, Sir, a few words will be sufficient to enable me to explain the course which I intend to take on this occasion. I am sorry to say that I find myself obliged to oppose the second reading of this Bill. By temperament and habit I am a supporter of authority and. and habit I am a supporter of authority, and, having been in a similar position to that which my honourable friend the Colonial Secretary now occupies, I have suffered to some extent official affliction, and have learned mercy. It is therefore always with regret that I am obliged to put myself in opposition to any Government, and my own personal leaning on this occasion would be, if it were possible, to give my voice with the honourable gentlement on the Government benches. But I am not able to do that. I hold strongly to the opinion, which I have constantly expressed in this Council of late, that, where a line of railway is required, or any public work of that kind, which imposes a charge upon the people, the making of that line, and the management of it when made, ought to rest absolutely in the hands of the Government, the representatives of the people. I hold that every departure

from that policy, which was the fundamental policy of 1870, will be attended with such consequences as those which have come upon us with respect to the District Railways Act. have no doubt that it is a question of time, and of only a short time, when we shall be in exactly the same position with regard to works which have already been partially constructed under the Railways Construction and Land Act. Besides that general objection, I have this objection to the scheme: that it will not pay. The reports of the Commissioners who were specially appointed to investigate this line are conclusive on that point: they declare that, even under the most favourable circumstances, there is no chance that a line to the West Coast can by any possibility be made to pay in a less period than ten years. Now, before a work of this kind is undertaken there should be shown some strong reason for it, and I am unable to find, after the most careful attention I have given to this measure, any sound reason why the colony should enter upon a speculation of the kind. Whatever we may say or whatever we may think, from any point of view I look upon it as inevitable that in the course of time-and not a very long time-the colony will, if the work is carried out, be called upon to take it over; and it will do so. Certain inducements to undertake this work have been offered, by an Act now upon the Statute Book, to this or any other company for a number of years past. The inducement, it is quite clear, was not good enough-30 per cent. of expenditure at £5,000 per mile for the construc-tion of the railway was not enough. We are therefore asked to authorize the investment of colonial property in an enterprise which will not pay, and to give 50 per cent. in value of the property of the colony upon an expenditure which is practically without limit; and, in addition, to give up the royalties upon coal found in the neighbourhood of the railway, and to guarantee the undertakers of this enterprise against a loss which may amount to £40,000 a year, under this particular 5th clause, which has been the object of so much discussion. Now, all that is to be done for the purpose of having what I call an unproductive work; and I think the colony is asked to make too great a sacrifice. If the naked proposition were put to this Assembly and to the people of this colony to spend two millions of borrowed money on the making of this line, we all know what the answer would be from the Legislature, and what the answer would be, with infinitely greater emphasis, from the people of the colony. It would be the emphatic pronouncement, No. And, Sir, the Public Works Department, with the resources of the colony, with cheap money, with an establishment of engineers and all the machinery of office to boot, could do that work very much more cheaply and better than it could possibly be done by any organization of the kind which under this Bill could possibly be provided. We are not content with one great work on the West Coast at present, for, while we propose to induce English capitalists to subscribe money and to under-

take the construction of a line the principal revenue from which it is admitted must arise from the carriage of coal, we are at the same moment invited to sanction the expenditure of nearly half a million of money to prevent the possibility of coals being carried from the district in any other way than by sea. It has been stated, upon authority which I am sure no one will be able successfully to controvert, that, on the Harbour of Westport, on the West Coast, being made accessible to vessels which would be able to carry 1,200 or 1,500 tons of coal, the freight of coal between Westport and Lyttelton would not cost more than 3s. per ton; and the probability of the carriage of all coal by sea, which is increased if the aid that is proposed is given to the harbour works at Westport, settles, I think, the question of the advisability of this railway-line altogether. No coal could possibly be carried on this line, and where the profit is to come from after that source of revenue has been withdrawn I have not been able to elicit. I think, as I have said, that it will be found, after a great deal of money and labour has been wasted in the construction of the line, after a great deal of public property —seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds' worth of public land—has been alienated, we shall be in the end forced to submit to the loss of that public property, and to take charge of and work the railway, and, under the provisions of the Act, to reimburse the syndicate, the promoters of the scheme, for their outlay upon it. That is a prospect which I, for one, cannot look on with satisfaction. I cannot, and I would not, for a moment in this Council give my vote to sanction such a project. have been told that this railway will cost the colony nothing. I have shown that it must cost the colony £750,000 in land, besides the loss in working the railway. But, Sir, we must remember that the lands of the colony, and the property of the colony of every kind, are already pledged as security to the public cre-ditor, and that, in thus dealing with property that does not of right belong to us,—in so investing it in an enterprise which can by no possibility, to my mind, be of a reproductive character, - we should be incurring the same kind of blame and doing the same kind of wrong which a fraudulent trader does who deals dishonestly with his creditors' property. And the blame would be just. I understand no difference in morals between the mass and the individual in a case of that kind. I have heard it said by honourable gentlemen opposite that if a certain clause of this Bill were erased they would not make any objection to the Bill passing its second reading. But the kernel of the Bill may be in that clause. Erase it and the Bill may become a sham. It ought to be understood that in erasing or in consenting to the erasure of a clause of this kind they would simply make the Bill a sham. I do not believe in shams, and I therefore believe that this Bill ought not to pass; and I shall record my vote against it, for the reasons I have expressed to the Council.

The Hon. Mr. BARNICOAT.—Sir, I should

be sorry to be a party to the promotion of any measure which would materially add to the heavy liabilities with which this overburdened colony is already afflicted; I should be sorry to add any load to shoulders that are already staggering under their burdens; and I hope I shall not be open to the charge of inconsistency because I am about to support the second reading of the measure now before the Council. It appears to me, Sir, to be simply this: an offer of land to those who choose to accept the offer for the construction of a certain railway. It virtually says we have abundant and superabundant land, and we are ready to give some of that land for the making of a railway. We incur no liabilities by the measure, that I can see. We make no pro-mises that on a future day will necessarily throw great pecuniary liabilities on the colony. But there is an objection, which to my mind is a very serious one if true, and which has been more than hinted at by the Hon. Mr. Richmond and the Hon. Dr. Pollen: that by an Act of this sort the Parliament renders itself liable to a charge of lending itself to an attempt to trade on the credulity of mankind. I do not think that is a just objection. Now, the Hon. Mr. Miller has said that Nelson is no part of this measure. For my part, I think Nelson is a very important part indeed of the scheme, and I have as much right to tell the Hon. Mr. Miller that the East and West Coast Railway is no part of the measure. It is to the Nelson portion of the measure that I shall address the few remarks I have to offer, and I do so with a view of showing that the offer may be, and probably is, a bond fide one, and that it is put forward honestly, and with no view to imposing on the credulity of speculators. In the volume of statutes of 1868 there is an Act called the Nelson and Cobden Railway Act, which was amended by an Act of 1869. It authorized the Superintendent of the Province of Nelson to send an agent to England, with authority to offer 10,000 acres of land for every mile of railway made on that line. Now, that line is very similar in character and partly identical in route with one of the lines contemplated by the Bill now before the Council, and, as far as I know, any remarks applying to the character of the country through which that line passes would also be applicable to the land through which the East and West Coast Railway passes. Negotiations were entered into by the Superintendent's agent, after some delay, in London, with Mr. Brogden, and they were as nearly completed as possible: in fact, it is generally understood and believed that the negotiations would have been completed, and probably by this time the railway would have been constructed by Mr. Brogden, but for the great public works scheme introduced by Sir Julius Vogel, which included the construction of a line of railway from one end to the other of each of the two Islands. In 1871 there was a sum of money voted for a portion of this great central line, which would be on one of the lines contemplated by this Bill—from Nelson to Foxhill; and the Railways Act of 1878

declared that it was expedient that a trunk line of railway through the Middle Island should be completed, and that it was necessary for that purpose that a railway to connect the Nelson Province with the principal part of Westland and Canterbury should be con-structed. So that the Parliament of New Zealand in 1873 declared its intention of constructing a railway similar to that which is now before the Council. Although there is not a large proportion of good arable land along the route, there is a large quantity of the very best timber land, timber which is of the best quality for making railway sleepers. I had the opportunity the other day of consulting one of the men engaged continually replacing sleepers on a line of railway where they have been experimenting with sleepers. I asked him which timber lasted the longest. His answer was, without hesitation, "Black-birch." Now, without hesitation, "Black-birch." Now, black-birch is the timber of this district. There are hundreds of thousands of acres covered with black-birch. Although a good deal of the land through which the railway would pass is very steep, hilly, and broken, yet, on the other hand, much of it is capable of carrying sheep, and considerable portions of it will eventually form some of the best sheepruns in the country. There is a great deal of gold, and the only obstacle to the working of it is the difficulty of getting provisions. It is supposed a profit will arise from the sale of townships along the line. It is also believed that the country possesses minerals of value; and there have been discoveries to substantiate that belief. I think this disposes of the question as to the soundness, the honesty, and the Zealand. I shall vote for the second reading of this Bill, hoping that it may be made to fulfil the object for which it has been proposed. The Hon. Mr. OLIVER.—Sir, it must be

and Nelson Railway Bill.

confessed that the demand which has arisen for this work—I allude to the principal work, the East and West Coast Canterbury line-is a very difficult one for politicians, especially for those who are intrusted with the guidance of their fellows, to deal with; and no doubt every person who has felt a responsibility of the sort will be very glad to see this difficulty removed out of our way. It has been a difficulty for some time, and I confess that unless we are going to pass this measure it will still be a difficulty: so that, if it can be easily got rid of, no doubt it would be very convenient to do so. I confess, for my own part, that, if I were not constrained by a sense of duty, I should very gladly seize some opportunity of recording my vote in a way that would facilitate the getting rid of this demand. But I do not think that the plan proposed ought to be accepted. I believe, in the first instance, that the colony does not possess in the district through which this line is to go sufficient land within the fifteen-mile distance to endow the work to be undertaken; and, that being my opinion, I foresee large difficulties if once a contract were made with such a syndicate as is contemplated. And then, if this work can-

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not be made with the land available, I say it ought not to be made at all. We ought not to permit the selection of land here, there, and everywhere—land which may pos-sibly be applied to a better and more useful undertaking. The land which is available for this line all persons who have travelled over from the East to the West Coast know to be almost worthless. Is it to be supposed that, if capitalists at Home knew the character of this country—possessing, no doubt, the most pic-turesque and beautiful scenery, but scenery made up of mountain-tops and glaciers, dense forests divided by rocks and ravines—any sane capitalist would invest his money in such an undertaking? No one can suppose it for a moment. But we know how gullible investors are, and we know how easy it is for persons interested as promoters to so gloss over the difficulties and misrepresent the real state of things as to induce resolutions. things as to induce people to rush in even to their ruin. It seems to me that, if the land were good, and could be made use of—if it could be rendered of such a money value as to be used for this purpose—it ought not to be used for this but for some other purpose. The valuation of the land is, according to the Bill, to be at its present value, unimproved by the railway; and, if it is to be supposed that land worth £750,000 can be got there without the railway, then I say that we have evidence of fertile lands in the colony which are now awaiting development by railways, and, supposing this land can be sold in the manner mentioned, it ought to be used for the making of such railways, and not for this. For years to come this railway will be utterly and entirely needless. It passes over country which cannot be settled. The advantage claimed for it is that it will unite the settlers in Canterbury with twenty-four thousand settlers on the West Coast, and the settlers of Canterbury demand this line for the purpose of enlarging their business relations in that direction. That I believe to be the sole reason for the demand which has arisen in Canterbury. lieve they will have a larger market opened to them by the construction of this line. But, as has been pointed out to the Council, the traffic will be entirely a terminal one. It will go from one end to the other without stopping at any intermediate places; there will be no intermediate places which will demand that goods should be delivered; and is it wise or just that we should sanction so expensive an undertaking as this, merely for the sake of connecting two places which are already connected by the surrounding sea? The communication by sea is quite perfect, and every-body who has examined the subject knows that the sea will always beat in cheapness railway communication. I have for a number of years taken a great interest in railway matters, and I know that the English railway-experts have for the last ten years been preaching to railway shareholders that they will never secure satisfactory dividends until their railways abandon this useless coal traffic into which they have gone of late. The

railways at Home have been developing a mineral traffic. They have been stifling the canal traffic, and competing with the sea traffic in coal and other minerals; and the result is that, year by year, the dividends from the railways are growing less and less. Honourable members who have informed themselves on this subject will know that what I say is the truth—that, as the mineral traffic has been developed on the English railways, so the dividends have come down; and so, what expectation can we have of a mineral traffic paying over such curves and grades as will have to be adopted for this line? It has been pointed out by several speakers that there is no just expectation of a mineral traffic paying at all. It is possible that the mineral traffic on our lines now open does not pay us. On some sections I believe that to be true; and I am quite sure that a mineral traffic on this proposed railway—if it ever exists, which I doubt—cannot pay. I doubt if a coal traffic will come into existence even if the line is formed; for I do not believe the railway will be able to compete with the sea traffic, supposing the harbours on the west coast of the Middle Island are improved. Even now, with a slight expenditure at Greymouth, the baz there has been so much deepened that it is quite easy to get in and out of that harbour with ships of moderate size. I believe that no railway could beat those ships at the present time, even without further improvement of the Greymouth Harbour. I do not know whether the expectation of freights being reduced to 3s. per ton, as has been suggested by one honourable gentleman, will ever be realized; but I am quite sure that, if ships of eight hundred tons can go out of the West Coast harbours, the freight will be so much reduced on coal that there will be no possibility of any railway competing with that mode of carriage. There is another reason, I think, why we should not adopt this proposal. It has been acknowledged, from the beginning of the public works and immigration policy, that it is necessary to penetrate the Middle Island with a main trunk line north and south; and one wonders to find such a proposal as this emanating from the principal members of the present Government. Sir Julius Vogel, four or five years ago, wrote a memorable letter to Mr. Oswald Curtis. In it he threw great blame on the Government of New Zealand for not continuously prosecuting and effectually carrying out the plan which, he said, was essential to our prosperity namely, this main trunk railway north and south of the Middle Island. And it is quite clear that, if the line contemplated in this Bill is constructed, we must abandon all hope, or expectation, or desire to have that main trunk line continued northward to Blenheim and Picton. But the Bill itself is very defective. Clause 5, which has been objected to by so many honourable members, if adopted, would, it seems to me, place us absolutely in this position: that the Government would contract with the promoters or syndicate undertaking this matter to carry on the working of

Hon. Mr. Oliver



this railway—to work the railway, whatever might be the results of it financially, whether it paid or whether there was a loss from month to month and year to year. I have no doubt—trom the method of the introduction of that clause—that it is the full intention of the Government, if the Bill is passed, to do that. I say we cannot afford that. We are in such a position at present that, if we have any energies to spare, we ought to devote them to works which are more properly called for, more useful, and more likely to be reproductive. The Hon, the Colonial Secretary pointed out the difficulties under which the miners on the West Coast are now labouring. He said that the country was so difficult that they could hardly find themselves in provisions.

East and West Coast

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I beg the honourable gentleman's pardon. I did not say anything of the kind. I did not say they could not live there, and could not supply

themselves with provisions.

The Hon. Mr. OLIVER. - My hearing of what the honourable gentleman said—and I think I shall be confirmed by other honourable members—was this: He pointed out the character of the country as being such as to make it extremely difficult for the miners to obtain their food there.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—It was, "The miners cannot subsist except at great expense. The Hon. Mr. OLIVER .- Well, that of itself proves the character of the country. The Hon. Sir George Whitmore says we are not responsible for what speculators may do. Well, we are not; and, as he says, the promoters of such undertakings may generally be trusted to look after their own interests: but it is not supposed for one moment that the persons who undertake this work are the persons who will carry it through, or that they intend to embark any large amount of their own capital in it. On the contrary, these are the men who hope to get some profit by inducing other persons to invest their money in the company's shares or debentures; and then shall we not be affected, by getting a character in London, the moncy-market of Europe, of being a place where so much money is sunk, as it probably will be by the shareholders in such a line as this? We shall share in the disgrace of having held out hopes which were not realized. We should by-and-by be an offence in the nostrils of persons who are looking out for investments. The Hon. Mr. Reeves—whose presence amongst us I am sure I welcome, and whose speech I very much admired—endeavoured to make a comparison between the prediction of the Hon. Mr. Miller with regard to the future of this line and the apprehensions of some Canter-bury people when the late Mr. Moorhouse proposed to make the tunnel through the Lyttelton hills. But what a contrast there is between the two works! In the one case there were the Canterbury Plains, rich, level plains, only waiting to be developed; there was a city settled by a numerous population, eager for enterprise, and having a knowledge of the land which was to be developed. That was

the prospect held out by the piercing of the tunnel—namely, the development of that beautiful country, and the making of a nation. What do we find where it is proposed to carry out this scheme? A series of mountain-ranges leading to a place which no doubt has proved rich in gold, and as to which large expectations have been entertained for years, but which expectations have not been realized. Every visitor to the West Coast, looking at the character of the country, has expected to hear of some discovery of rich metal of some kind or other. He has expected that a discovery of all sorts of the richer metals, such as gold and silver, and of the useful metals, as copper, tin, and lead, may be announced any day; but so far these expectations have not been fulfilled. We have got nothing from that district hitherto but gold, which, I am sorry to say, is not found so plentifully to-day as it was ten years ago. That is the contrast which I would draw between the two undertakings. Then, I want to refer for a moment to another inconsistency of the Government. The Government has at its head a gentleman who has identified himself with certain very definite views in regard to the land and its occupation, and he has advocated that the State should be the owner of the land, and that it should not part with its ownership, but rather cling to it, and substitute for the system of freehold a system of leasing land. And what do we find here? We find a project for the alienation of the largest area of land that has yet been got rid of in any one transaction. That is a most extraordinary thing, and I leave it to my honourto show the consistency of the Government in making this proposal. Then, as to the way of dealing with the land: we have taken great trouble to establish a proper system of settling people on it and developing its resources by making roads to it, and so on; and now, if we adopt this proposal, we shall be giving over our proper functions as organizers of settlement to an irresponsible company, and we do not know what use they will make of the land. They probably will not be so successful in coping with the difficulty of settlement as the Government of the country. Then, what may we expect from the alienation of a large area of auriferous land? All sorts of complications and difficulties have already arisen in connection with this. We have had some warning of the difficulty of making a proper arrangement for the working of auriferous land with private owners, and here we propose to do it on a very large scale indeed. Now I shall only devote a few words to what has already been mentioned by several speakers-namely, the undoing of a wrong system of that kind with one hand and extending it with the other. We were asked a few days ago to give our consent to the purchasing by the colony of the district railways, and one clause of the Bill put before us repealed the District Railways Act. and its amendments. Now we are called on to act, to a very largely-increased extent, in the way which has already been so entirely com-

demned. The estimated cost of these district railways was only £600,000; but here we have £1,500,000 for one railway, £1,000,000 for another, and I do not know how much for some railways in the North Island. It seems to me that that is an inconsistency which has yet to be explained. I will not occupy the time of the Council longer, but will conclude by saying that I shall feel it my duty to record my

vote against the Bill.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—I should not like this debate to close without saying a few words on the question. If it were possible, I should be very glad to support this Bill as brought down by the Government. I look upon it as wrong to give grounds even for the idea that there is any spirit of party in this Council. I deprecate that altogether. So far as my feel-ing is concerned it would be in favour of the Bills of the Government, and it is with very great regret that I have been compelled to make up my mind that I cannot support this Bill, but that, on the contrary, it is my duty to oppose it altogether. I shall very shortly give my reasons for that. I will not go over the ground that has been taken up by previous speakers; but I will state, as shortly as I can, that the real objection, to my mind, to the course proposed is that, when there is only a limited amount of land at the disposal of the Government, we should give over to no company whatever so large an area as is proposed by this Bill. That question is not answered at all by saying that the land now is not available, and that it had better be got rid of to make it available. I have a strong idea that no land ought to be given away in any sense at all, and giving so large a quantity as is proposed to any corporation will undoubtedly put that corporation in the position of having a large influence, which I say the Government ought to retain itself. It cannot be otherwise. ought to retain itself. It cannot be otherwise. From all I can learn, I do not think that it is at all probable that any action will be taken on this Bill. The Hon. Mr. Reeves said it was understood that there were two companies prepared to take up this scheme. But no one has been bold enough to mention any company at We hear a lot of talk about syndicates and companies; but we do not know who they are, and I do not think, from all I can learn, that there is any one prepared to take any action at all on this Bill, if it is passed. But that does not remove my objection to passing the Bill, because I look upon it that by passing it we shall lower our credit by having passed a Bill for the mere purpose of inviting speculation, or, rather, making an attempt to get capital without any prospect of profit to those who supply that capital. We know the avidity there is for land in this colony, and if the land proposed to be given to this company were at all fit for settlement there would be a creat demand for it already. There is no such demand for it at all, nor do I think it is worth the minimum price fixed by this Bill. But I do object to passing a Bill of this kind, which I look upon as tending to favour speculation. I know there is a class of persons who think

that, if the colony can only attract capital, no matter from where, even if no return is got for it, it is a good thing for the colony. I belong to a different school. I do not believe that, in the end, a country derives any benefit from money brought into it on which there is not a fair return. My honourable friend Sir George Whitmore seems to favour the view that I have stated I differ from, for I understood him to say that these speculators or capitalists were very well able to take care of themselves. But they are not able to take care of themselves. It is not the syndicate, it is the bona fide investors, who suffer in the end; and to attract capital without any regard to the consequences will do no good to the country: it is a perfect mis-take to think that it will. To prove that, I will mention to the Council an instance which is perfectly fresh in my memory. There is a small British colony called Honduras - and really the circumstances attending the loan I am going to mention are too grotesque to believe possible. Certain speculators got up a scheme for a ship railway or canal, I forget which, and actually they got a loan of one or two millions subscribed in London. Of course there were very large pickings out of that. No such amount ever reached the Government of But a certain amount did, and Honduras. with it they completed a portion of the works. What was the result? They endeavoured in a sort of way to pay interest for a time; but in the end they ceased paying, and the credit of the country is entirely ruined. That is one instance. Then, some reference has been made to the American system of getting railways made. I do not believe in that system. As well as I am able to learn, from the best books on the subject available to me, they have two ways. They get the money for their railways, if they can, from foreigners, and, if they cannot do that, they give land grants. But, from all I have been able to learn, these American railways have been sources of great loss to European capitalists; I do not believe they have been of any benefit whatever to them. The Americans are very clever no doubt, and no people are more astute in inducing capitalists of other countries to invest money there, for which they get a very insufficient return. I do not believe in that at all. You can scarcely take up a paper without seeing an account of some great stroke in finance there, such as "watering of railway stock-which I believe means an irregular or illicit issue of stock, to some extent in defiance of the law. Some one loses, and the company gets the money. Well, I do not think the American plan is at all a good one, or one we should adopt here. So much as regards these two instances. Now I will go to the Clause 5 is so utterly preposterous Bill itself. that I think the representatives of the Government here will hardly have the assurance seriously to press it in Committee. I do not think that is possible. I invite the Hon. the Colonial Secretary to give in his reply a little explanation on a point which, I confess, I do not quite understand. I refer to clause 8, the wording of which is very indefinite, and I wish

Hon. Mr. Oliver



the Hon. the Colonial Secretary to explain if I am right in thinking that under it, if there is not sufficient land within fifteen miles of the railway, land may be selected in any part of the colony. If that is so, I look upon it as a still more dangerous thing than the 5th clause. I cannot think that to be intended.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—No.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON. - I only call the honourable gentleman's attention to it, and I hope he will be good enough to explain what the real meaning of the 8th clause is, and will explain also where, if there is not sufficient land within the fifteen-mile limit, it is to come

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.-Look at clause 9.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—Subsection (3) of

that clause reads,

"The value of the land to be granted under this Act shall be calculated upon the estimated market value thereof immediately prior to the making of the contract, irrespective of any Land Act or regulations made thereunder, and without regard to any prospective value that will be given to such lands by the proposed undertaking; but no land shall be deemed of a less value than ten shillings per acre.

"Such value shall be ascertained by the Surveyor-General on behalf of the Governor and some person to be appointed by the company, and, in case of their disagreement, by some person to be chosen by the Surveyor-General and such first-mentioned person; and their certificate, or that of any two of them, in writing, of such value, given for the purposes of the contract, shall be binding and conclusive both upon the Governor in Council and the

company."

But there may be no such land specially benefited at all. In the opinion of many of us it is very doubtful if the railway will be of any benefit to any land, or to any one except a few speculators, who may make something out of it But the amount of land in the first instance. will have to be found somewhere, and, as far as I can see, there is nothing to prevent it being said that land in any part of Canterbury is specially benefited to a certain extent by the making of the line. Now, there are other grounds of objection to this Bill. We know, from inquiries made by a Committee of this Council in relation to the district railways, on what a small foundation a large amount of debt can be created. In the case of the Duntroon Railway, as well as we could judge, a debt of £80,000 was created, while the capital paid up was somewhat under £400. I see nothing to prevent the same thing happening under this Bill. Another observation I was going to make applies to this point also. I see nothing in this Bill compelling the company to complete its line. It may be said that there will be a contract entered into for the whole line; but there is no guarantee that the whole will be made, because it is provided that, when the Minister for Public Works is satisfied that a section of the line is finished, the land may be given. What is to prevent a useless uncon-

nected section—the easiest section as to engineering-being made, the land being given, and then the contractor giving up his contract? The law in reference to the question of debentures I understand to be this—it is very true that, under the Companies Act, the only protection the law gives is this: that the promoters of a company have to put forward their scheme, and in their articles of association they must state what amount of money they are prepared to borrow. And, from inquiries I have made, I find that in no case of respectable companies in England is the amount borrowed at all equivalent to the capital subscribed. But, if a company is formed under a special Act in England, a very strong restriction is put upon the sum the company is allowed to borrow; and in no instance that I have seen-and I have taken the trouble to look into the point-is the sum allowed to be borrowed, where special powers are given, more than one-fourth of the subscribed capital, and usually it is only one-third. In that case people lend their money with some sort of security; but here there is not the slightest protection given at all. This million and a half the company might borrow. There might be some paltry amount of paid-up capital, and the liabilities might be left unpaid. I object to the credit of the colony, which in effect will be connected with it, being injured by the passing of a Bill of this kind. It was always said that with district railways there would be no such thing as liability on the colony, that the people who built them would do so with their eyes open, and that the ratepayers would not commit themselves to obligations without being fully aware of what they were doing, and that, if anybody lost by it, it must be his own fault. But what do we find? Why, the whole thing has broken down: the railways have not proved profitable, the rating power has proved unworkable, the thing collapses, and a claim is made on the colony to take the whole affair over and relieve those who have voluntarily incurred obligations. I say it will be the same here. Then, in what a shape is the Bill brought before us! There is no plan, and there are no estimates, except a bald guess that the cost will be a million and a half. But for the subject having been so much discussed, I would read some extracts from the report of the Royal Commission on this subject; but, as it is, I shall only quote a few It may be considered that this report is what the Government have brought in this proposal on; and what is the opinion of the gentlemen who formed that Commission? They

say,—
"After considering the whole of the foregoing conclusions and opinions, we most respectfully report to your Excellency that, on account of its being the shortest line between the centres of production and demand, we recommend the route by Arthur's Pass as the most suitable; but the most sanguine view the Commission can take is, that there is no prospect of the traffic paying more than working expenses on the completion of any of the alternative lines. No commensurate indirect results can be anticipated from the expenditure of so large a sum as would be necessary for its construction, and not for as many as ten years or more can full interest on the cost be hoped for."

Now, this is the most authentic thing we have got on which we are asked to give these I will only detain the Council with one other short extract, and that is from the evidence given by Mr. Blair, Engineer in Charge for the Middle Island, to the Commission. Here are two questions and answers from that evidence :-

"Can you give any idea of what would be the proportion of working expenses on such a piece of line?—I should say that it would be considerably higher than the average of New Zealand lines—probably 20 per cent. higher.

"What is the present average of the New Zealand lines?—Something like 60 per cent. I think the working expenses of such a piece of line would be 20 per cent. more than the

general average."

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That, by the most sanguine view, shows that the working expenses must be 80 per cent., assuming the traffic to be as large as the average traffic on the colonial railways. And yet that is the only reliable datum that can be brought forward in support of this Bill. I have heard of nothing else. The Hon. the Colonial Secretary gave us no calculations or estimates; he gave us no data as to the cost of or probable returns from this work - nothing whatever. This report is made by two gentlemen very well known to us—known to us as members of the other House—and Mr. Napier Bell, a professional engineer. It is impossible to get more impartial persons; they belong to the North Island, and could not possibly have any local feeling at all. Therefore I say, on all accounts, this work is shown to be of a most uncertain and speculative nature; and not only is the work in itself bad, but the mode of carry-ing it out is still worse. I would say that, if it were absolutely decided that such a railway was essential, I should prefer it should be made with the money of the colony. It would be a very extravagant proceeding to do that, but I feel certain that it would be better than the course proposed in this Bill. Nobody supposes that syndicates and companies are going to do all this for nothing: certainly not. They expect to make a great deal out of it, and to come on the colony in the end if unsuccessful. observation I have heard repeatedly for the last day or so is that the Council need give itself little trouble, but that the sooner the Bill was passed the better it would be, as it would be waste paper, for it was certain never to be acted upon. I do not think that is a reason for passing it at all. I have already dealt with that; and I think it would be a bad precedent to pass a measure of this kind, apparently holding out important inducements to parties to invest money in a scheme in which no person having capital in the colony would invest one sixpence. There is certainly no pressing need shown for this railway. It is certainly true, as we have been told, that these

diggings on the West Coast have not been in a satisfactory state for years. There is no doubt about that; but does anybody think that, if this line were built to-morrow, it would give vitality to the West Coast or remove the state of depression there? It would do nothing of the sort. The future of that Coast, to my mind, will depend upon its coal deposits, with the development of which we shall have to deal shortly. I entirely agree with the observation of the Hon. Mr. Oliver that, of all traffics ruinous to railways, a mineral traffic is the worst, and to look for a payable mineral traffic on such gradients as these lines must necessarily have is perfect madness. We have seen here what has been the effect of building a line with bad gradients in the case of the line over the Rimutaka Range. That line, or a portion of it, can never pay. Nor under any circumstances could this line pay with a mineral traffic. It is said that there are one hundred thousand people in Canterbury, and twenty-four thousand on the other side; but that conveys nothing to my mind. Where is the traffic? There is a coach that crosses the range now twice a week, I believe, and it takes all the travellers. Very few people have business there, and these, and a few strangers who come to admire the scenery, are the only travellers. That is not what makes the traffic of a railway; and there will be no traffic except what I should think would necessarily be worked at a loss-mineral traffic. Nor can I believe for a moment that, even with the harbours as they are now, the railway could compete with the sea traffic. For these reasons I look upon this scheme, as I said before, as a most speculative and dangerous one, and the mode in which it is proposed to be carried out as more dangerous still; and I shall vote against the second reading of the Bill.
The Hon. Mr. CHAMBERLIN.—Sir, I have

the assurance of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary that he considers this Bill a policy Bill, and that I have full liberty to criticise it and the Government to my heart's content, and that he does not care one straw what I say.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—No, no. The Hon. Mr. CHAMBERLIN.—I am quite aware that whatever I may say will have a similar effect to water thrown on a duck's back. Nevertheless I shall make a few brief remarks on this subject. There is little left to be said, as the subject has already been fully dealt with by several honourable gentlemen in an eloquent and efficient manner. I may say at once that I not only disapprove of this scheme, bùt also of many others that are about to be introduced, and have been introduced, by the Government. I look upon this scheme as undoubtedly a borrowing scheme, if not directly, certainly indirectly, and I think the country is not in a position to go on with schemes of the character of those put before this House. fear that, if such measures as this are passed by this Parliament, the country will feel the ill effects for many years if not for generations to come. There can be very little doubt that at the present time the country is overburdened

Hon. Mr. Wilson

with taxation; and, as a necessary consequence, if the country goes on with these enormous, speculative, mad, and reckless schemes, nothing else can be the ultimate result than the utter disorganization of the entire country. It must either be that or repudiation, and I think very few of us would like to see repudiation staring us in the face. It is im-possible to ignore the fact that all these public works must have the effect, sconer or later, of increasing taxation. Then, we have to consider, upon whom would the taxation fall? Not upon the mass of the people, but upon a comparative few. I was reckoning the other day upon what proportion it would fall, and, as far as I can make out, about one in every fifteen persons would be liable to pay this heavy taxation in this colony. I think I saw the statement the other day that about thirty-one thousand persons in the colony bear the burdens of taxation. I look upon this Bill also as discounting the future. For schemes like this propose to give away enormous blocks of land, and, in doing that, we are giving away what the future ought to deal with. It is stated that these lands are of very little value; but in my opinion it is questionable whether they are not of very great value, if not on the surface, underneath; and I am of opinion that already there is a syndicate cut-and-dried, and knowing considerably more than others do about this country, and I am inclined to think that they know not only of coal, but of other valuable minerals in this land, and that in the course of time we shall hear how the country has been done out of its wealth. look upon it that this measure and others of a similar character will have a very injurious effect on the colony. It will be seen that the people of this colony will get very heavy burdens of taxation, and not only will it have the very practical effect of keeping people of property from coming to the colony, but those who have anything to less will gradually align. who have anything to lose will gradually slip away, taking half a loaf with them as better than none. And then what will be the result but that those left behind will be doubly or trebly taxed, and that the entire population will suffer? Now, of course, schemes like this are naturally popular. The immediate effect of them is to benefit the labouring-class, and not only those, but the trading-class, from the wholesale merchant to the smallest retail trader; and therefore they all hold up their hands cheerfully for borrowing, make what they can, and clear out. These are their ideas. After they have made their pile they do not care one snuff of a candle what becomes of the colony generally. It has already been clearly set forth by several honourable mem-bers that this proposed railway cannot possibly pay. It is not necessary for me to go into details upon this Bill, or repeat what has been said, as so much has already been said upon it. I consider that any Government that proposes this and other measures of a similar character does not deserve the confidence of the colony. What security has the colony for these enormous sums of money?

We have borrowed already on our lands and on our power of taxing the people, and I should like to know, if the colony fails to pay interest on its debentures, what position the bond-holders would be in. I am not saying that is likely to occur just yet; but, if this excessive speculation with loans goes on, there is no telling to what extent the colony may become involved. And if at any time it happens that the colony is in a still more depressed state than it is in at the present moment, the colony will not be in a position to pay interest on its loans. What, then, will be the position of the bondholders? They cannot take the land away from the colony; they cannot take the property; they will have to raise the money entirely upon the revenues of the colony obtained by taxation. If the country becomes almost in a ruined state, how are they to be It means neither more nor less than paid? repudiation. That may come in the future, though I do not say that at present it is at all likely. Still, I think it is our duty to prevent the possibility of such an occurrence, by discouraging reckless schemes of this character. But I hope that the English money-lenders will have their eyes opened to the state of affairs now existing in the colony, and to the reckless schemes that are proposed. If, on the contrary, schemes of a payable character were brought forward, I do not think there would be the least difficulty in getting almost unlimited loans; but such a scheme as this would damn the name of any colony. And what is the reason a Bill of this character is brought for-ward? These non-payable railways—why are they proposed? They are brought forward ostensibly to assist the colony out of its depression; but they will do nothing of the sort, but will only have a temporary effect while the loans are being expended, and the reaction that will occur will be of a very dangerous character. As soon as the money has been spent a reaction will take place, and, the people having been so long accustomed to the expenditure of public money, we shall have a large rising of the population, with immense political power, which will continue to enforce further loans, until it is impossible to get any more, in order to give employment to the people who have the Parliament in their hands. Then, there is another thing. The moneys proposed to be brought into the colony by these schemes will have the effect of raising the price of labour, because I do not see or hear that the Government propose any measure whatever to bring further labour into the colony; and, if the price of labour rises, the works proposed to be carried out will cost far more, probably, than is calculated on. When is this borrowing to cease? Is there ever to be an end to it? I do not see that there is. If this sort of thing goes on, where is it to end? It is clearly a very serious matter, and I think this Council should set its back against further borrowing for schemes of this kind. I do not say that the colony should cease altogether to carry on the construction of the railways that formed part of the original scheme of 1870, because I think they must be made; but, at the same time, I do not advocate too hasty a completion of them. It is proposed, I believe, to continue the main trunk line of this Island from Te Awamutu. Now, unquestionably, that is a work that ought to be done; but I am not one of those who advocate the immediate completion of that line. I think it is a work that will take some years to com-plete; and, at the same time, I think that proper surveys should be made of both lines, or more than two lines—that the country should be searched and surveyed in all directions, in order that the best route should be chosen.

Readings.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I rise to a point of order. I do not wish to interrupt my honourable friend, but I think he has travelled outside the subject of the debate in traversing the general policy of the Government, and in discussing the route of the northern trunk line.

The Hon. Mr. CHAMBERLIN.-I only mention that to show that the Government encourage works of a non-public character, which I think wrong for them to do. If the honourable member desires to stop my remarks, I will sit down.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY. — The honourable gentleman does not understand me. I had no wish to interrupt him, but only that he should confine his remarks to the subject under discussion.

The Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL.—The question

is not the North Island Railway.

The Hon. Mr. CHAMBERLIN.—If the honourable gentleman wishes, I will refer to the Duntroon Railway. I look upon the proposal to construct a railway of this description over the ranges as nothing less than an ex-periment to see how much more it will cost taking the coal over the hills than round by water; and I think that such measures as these, and the effect they would produce in the colony in the course of a few years, would shake the foundations of society, and interfere with colonization through the demoralizing effects they would have upon the people of the colony. I shall support the second reading of the Bill, upon condition that amendments are made in the Bill to take out what I should call the sting of the Bill. If that is done, I may support the third reading.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN .- I think it advisable that we should have time to consider and weigh the valid reasons for and against the Bill, and therefore, Sir, I beg to move the adjournment of the debate till to-morrow.

Debate adjourned.

The Council adjourned at ten minutes past ten o'clock p.m.

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. Thursday, 23rd October, 1884.

st Readings—Second Readings—Third Readings—Bills discharged—Defence of the Colony—Awarua Block—R. P. Hodge—Manawatu Land—Wellington Waste Lands Board—Raliway Sleepers—Dunedin Gaol Warders—Torpedo Boat for Lyt-Hon. Mr. Chamberlin

telton — Tadmor Postmaster — Langdale and Dreyerton Telephone — Telephone Exchange — Appeals against Wardens' Decisions—St. Joseph's Orphanage — Police Prosecutions — Government Employés—Wellington College Reserves Confirmation Bill—School Committees Election Bill—Dog Registration Bill—South Island Native Reserves Rill—Printers and Newspapers Registration Bill — Gold Duty Reduction Bill — Armed Constabulary Bill.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READINGS. Animals Protection Bill, Sheep Bill.

SECOND READINGS. Hokitika Steam-Tug Bill, Cruelty to Animals Bill.

THIRD READINGS. Hokitika Steam-Tug Bill, False Notice of Birth, Marriage, and Death Bill, Municipal Corporations Bill.

BILLS DISCHARGED. Cruelty to Animals Bill, Constitution Bill.

DEFENCE OF THE COLONY. Mr. T. THOMPSON asked the Government, If they will have the lecture recently delivered at Wellington by His Excellency the Governor, on the defence of the colony, published for general circulation throughout the colony? He understood that the reports which had been published in most of the leading papers of the colony were not true copies of the lecture, and therefore he desired that a true copy should be published, for the purpose of giving the fullest information on the subject.

Mr. TOLE replied that it was the intention of the Government to have this lecture published in pamphlet form, and distributed among the various public libraries and reading - rooms

throughout the colony.

AWARUA BLOCK.

Mr. LOCKE asked the Government, Whether they will, without unnecessary delay, give effect to the recommendation of Mr. Clarke, Royal Commissioner, "That the Government should compensate Riparata Kahutia and others for a block of land of 109 acres, called Awarua, adjoining the Township of Gisborne, taken by the Government in error, and sold at the sale of town lands, Gisborne"?

Mr. BALLANCE replied that he had seen the report of the Commissioner, and it appeared to be a very strong one. But he understood that a petition upon this question was now before the Native Affairs Committee, and had not been reported upon. He would like the honourable gentleman to ask the question after the report of the Committee was brought down.

R. P. HODGE. Mr. T. THOMPSON asked the Government. If they purpose giving effect to the recommendation of the Public Petitions Committee on the petition of R. P. Hodge?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that it was

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the intention of the Government to have this matter inquired into.

#### MANAWATU LAND.

Mr. MACARTHUR asked the Minister of Lands, Whether the Government will place a sufficient sum on the estimates this session to open up and prepare for sale the Pohangina, Waitapu, and Otamakapua Blocks, in the Manawatu District, containing about a hundred and twenty thousand acres of first-class land; and, if the vote be granted by the House, whether the Minister of Lands will take immediate steps to expend the money on the above object during the recess? He had to apologize to the honourable member for Rangitikei for asking this question, because some of the land mentioned in it was within the honourable member's district. But the opening-up of that land might very much affect the district he (Mr. Macarthur) represented. He understood that the sum of £5,000 had been placed on the estimates two years ago to be expended in opening up one block; but that vote had lapsed. He wished to know whether the Government would have the vote renewed; and, if so, whether they would be prepared to spend the money during the recess. There was a large amount of first-class land along the line. Mr. Dobson, the surveyor, in his report furnished to the North Island Trunk Railway Commit-tee, spoke of the land as being of very good quality. With regard to the Pohangina Block, which was within his own district, a contract had been let, but the work was not proceeded with. Fresh tenders were again called for, but the Government refused to accept them, for what reason he did not know. If the vote were renewed, he trusted the Minister of Lands would take steps to have the money expended in order to the opening-up of these valuable blocks of land.

Mr. BALLANCE said the vote would be renewed, and tenders invited for the work. The Government recognized the desirability of settling this land, which was of exceedingly good quality, and suitable for settlement. With regard to the expenditure of the money, the Government would take that matter into their careful consideration.

WELLINGTON WASTE LANDS BOARD.

Mr. MACARTHUR asked the Government, If they will take steps to give the inhabitants of the west coast of this Island, within the Provincial District of Wellington, some representation on the Wellington Waste Lands Board? He need hardly point out that the constitution of the Waste Lands Board did not give the slightest representation to the inhabitants of the west coast of this Island. He was quite aware that it was a nominated Board, and it was very inconvenient for members resid-ing on the West Coast to attend that Board, even if they were appointed to it; but he thought that a district which had grown into such importance as the West Coast should have some representation on the Board, and that the Government should give the inhabi-

tants of the district a voice in the disposal of the land in that locality. He thought the present members of the Board were either Wellington or Wairarapa residents. He admitted that the Wairarapa district was a very important one, but it seemed to him absurd that a district which was quite as important as the Wairarapa should have nothing to say in the disposal of the land; and there was no one to whom the inhabitants could refer in regard to any matter affecting the waste lands on the West Coast.

Dunedin Gaol Warders.

Mr. BALLANCE quite agreed that the West Coast had a good claim to be represented on the Waste Lands Board. It was the intention of the Government to appoint some gentleman, after the session, to fill the present vacancy on the Board. They had not yet made a selection, but they thought that the West Coast was fully entitled to representation on the Board.

## RAILWAY SLEEPERS

Mr. BRADSHAIGH-BRADSHAW asked the Minister for Public Works, If he will take into favourable consideration the use of red- and white-pine creosoted sleepers, instead of imported timber?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that a contract was entered into in June, 1882, for 50,000 creosoted sleepers, at 3s. 2d. each; but were now being proceeded against. The timbers specified were rimu, miro, ribbonwood, black- and silver-birch. White-pine was considered too soft. He thought a further trial should be given to the proposal by calling for fresh tenders. Experiments had been made in injecting the creosote, and they were quite successful.

# DUNEDIN GAOL WARDERS.

Mr. BRADSHAIGH-BRADSHAW asked the Minister of Justice, If it be true that the warders in the Dunedin Gaol are on duty the number of hours they are on duty from day to day? Also, if it be true that warders in Dunedin Gaol or other places in Otago are on duty four or five Sundays before getting one Sunday off duty; and are the rules in Dunedin as regards the duty of warders the same as in other first-class prisons of the colony?

Mr. TOLE replied that the warders in the Dunedin Gaol were not on duty, as a rule, fifteen hours a day. They might have been on one or two occasions, when there was some casualty on the staff. They were on duty twelve and thirteen hours a day alternately. As a rule they should get every third Sunday off duty. A routine of duty had been issued for the officers of all gaols in the colony; but, in consequence of there being a hulk in connection with the gaol at Dunedin, the duty fell somewhat harder there than at other gaols. No complaints had been made in the proper quarter by the officers. The Inspector had been instructed to look into this matter of the officers' duties at his next visit to Dunedin.

TORPEDO BOAT FOR LYTTELTON. Mr. ALLWRIGHT asked the Minister of

Defence, If he will give instructions for the torpedo boat now at Port Chalmers, but intended for Lyttelton, to be forwarded to Lyttelton at once? He might state that the Naval Brigade would take charge of the boat, and the Government need not fear that the boat would not be carefully looked after.

Mr. BALLANCE was glad to hear that the Naval Brigade were prepared to take charge of the boat. It was the intention to locate the torpedo boats at the four principal ports
- Port Chalmers, Lyttelton, Wellington, and Auckland—and as soon as arrangements could be made the boats would be sent to these places. They were of very delicate construc-tion, and would have to be towed, or they would have to steam the way.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked if the boats were to be under the charge of the Naval Brigades at

the ports mentioned.

Mr. BALLANCE could not say; but the Naval Brigade at Lyttelton had agreed to take charge of the boat to be sent there. Arrange ments would be made which he believed would be satisfactory.

## TADMOR POSTMASTER.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE asked the Postmaster-General, Whether he will place a sum on the estimates to provide a small salary for the Postmaster at Tadmor, who has never received any payment for his services? He would point out to the Postmaster-General that this Postmaster had conducted the post-office at Tadmor for a great number of years, and he received no salary whatever for his services. Originally the Tadmor mails were not very large, neither were they very numerous; but the growing importance of the district had induced the authorities to send the mails there twice a week. It was hardly to be expected that any settler could give several hours on two or three days in the week to receive and despatch mails, without receiving some remuneration. He trusted that the Government would place a small sum on the estimates to recoup this gentleman for the services he had rendered to the public.

Mr. STOUT said this was a very small post-The total receipts for the year were under £6, and there was not more than an average of two letters a day received. This post-office was put up for the convenience of the people of the place, and was only two and a half miles from another post-office. The department did not see its way to make any allowance, but if the duties should increase some

small gratuity would be given.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE said the information supplied by the department was wrong. There was no post-office within a great many miles of this one.

## LANGDALE AND DREYERTON TELE-PHONE.

Mr. BEETHAM asked the Postmaster-Gene-

visability of establishing a telephone-station at Langdale, Whareama; also the advisability of establishing a telephone-station at the Dreyer-

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ton Post-office, Wairarapa?

Mr. STOUT replied that a telephone-station at Langdale would be to accommodate only a few runholders, and the Government thought they ought to be at the expense of a private wire for themselves. As to a Dreyerton telephone-station, as soon as the railway was more advanced in that district there would be a telephone-station established there.

#### TELEPHONE EXCHANGE.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Commissioner of Telegraphs, Whether he will make provision for having the telephone exchange opened from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays? He had been induced to put this question from the fact that there was no communication in the large centres of population on Sundays. In the case of hospitals and asylums, where the immediate at-tendance of medical men might be required, they were entirely shut out from telephonic communication during the Sunday. In many cases it was a matter of life and death, and he thought the telephone exchange should be kept open on Sunday as well as on any other day, and the cost to the State would be the payment of ten shillings to a clerk to attend to the office. He knew of one case of emergency in Wellington, where the surgeon was wanted, and the delay that occurred militated against the success of the operation to be performed. There was another case of a patient suffering from delirium tremens, who had got away from the building, and if communication had been open with the police office to obtain assistance the result might have been different from what had occurred. Considering the small cost, and the great convenience it would be to the public, the Government should popularize the telephonic exchange, and not shut persons out from the use of the telephone from 8 o'clock a.m. until 5 o'clock p.m. on Sundays. At all events, as regarded communication be-tween medical men and their patients, or as between charitable institutions and hospitals, it was, in his opinion, absolutely necessary that arrangements should be made for maintaining communication. It was with this object in view that he asked the question.

Mr. STOUT, in reply, said that there had been no general expression of opinion that what was asked for in this question should be granted. Honourable members were aware that the telephone exchange was connected mainly with business premises, and the only persons who desired any change from present Sunday practice were the doctors. The Government did not see their way to comply with the request of those gentlemen, for they were not desirous of increasing the Sunday work of

Government employés.

# APPEALS AGAINST WARDENS' DECI-SIONS.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Minister of Mines, ral, If he will take into consideration the ad- If he will this session prepare amended regulations under and in conformity with "The Mines Act, 1877," and that in the said regulations power should be given to appeal against the decisions of the Wardens when given in hearing objections to grants for rights under sections 22 and 27 of regulations now in force? Section

22 provided that-

1884.1

"Any person desirous of obtaining a registered right to any of the under-mentioned claims, rights, or privileges shall, after making the same, give notice to the Warden and to all persons whose interests will obviously be affected, in the form provided in the Schedule hereto, or to the like effect, and shall post and maintain for fourteen clear days copies of such notices in such conspicuous places as are hereinafter more particularly specified: Waterrace, drainage area, tail-race, branch race, flood-race, sludge-channel, main tail-race, alterations or extension of a race, diversion of the course of a creek or river, tramway or shoot for mining purposes, dam or reservoir, puddling machine, amalgamation of claims, residence area, tunnel, protection for more than fourteen days and renewal, special site for machinery or for any other mining purpose, double claim, extended claim, prospecting area, ordinary quartz claim."

In all these cases applications were to be heard by the Warden. And section 27 read thus:-

"At the time and place appointed for the hearing of any application for any of the claims, rights, or privileges specified in section 22, the name of the applicant shall be called, and the application and objections, if any, heard; and if no valid objection has been lodged, and if the Warden sees no valid objection, he may grant the application, upon such terms as he may think necessary or desirable for the public good; and the same shall be registered, and a certificate of registration, or, in the case of a water-race, a license, shall be issued to the ap-

Under this regulation it was left in the power of the Warden to decide applications that might involve thousands of pounds' worth of property, and there was no right of appeal against the decision, and no opportunity for review. Under the Gold Fields Act of 1865, a Warden, in giving a decision, if called upon had to state his reasons, and these reasons were subject to be reviewed; but now a Warden, sitting in his ministerial capacity, could decide one way or the other in reference perhaps to property of very great value, and the person aggrieved had no remedy whatever. Another ground of complaint was that a Warden had no power to award expenses. In cases where an objection was upheld, the objector got no expenses: he brought his witnesses, and perhaps had to travel twenty miles, and, though successful, yet he received nothing for expenses. He held that this should be altered, and that, in dealing with such matters, the Warden should have the same power that he would have if sitting in a judicial capacity. If a man's objection were not good, then he should have to pay expenses; but, if his objection were good, he should have his costs. He might mention a

case to illustrate what he had been saying, and which must be known to the Minister. alluded to the case of Byrne, Smith, and Company, where a Warden granted a certificate for a prospecting area. Shortly after this he granted a lease for a claim overlapping the prospecting area. The two titles were extant at the same time, and both persons were in possession at the same time. The same thing might occur again, and yet the person aggrieved had to be content with the Warden's decision, having no right of appeal. That was one phase of the question. Then, he had received a letter from Frederick Marshall, secretary to the Kumara Miners' Association, calling attention to other matters. Mr. Marshall, in writing with reference to the Bill amending the Mines Act which he (Mr. Seddon) had brought before the House, said,-

Wardens' Decisions.

"I see you intend to introduce a measure to amend the Mines Act. I have long thought something of the kind necessary, and hope you will pardon me if I offer a suggestion or two on the subject. In the first place, I will draw your attention to a discrepancy that arises between clauses 9 and 12, Section III. of the regulations. You will see that clause 9 provides a tabulated form showing the extent of ground a man or party can hold. In clause 12, relating to frontage claims, each man is entitled to hold 100ft. frontage, so that, say a party of five driving a tunnel on the frontage system strike a lead of gold, they have the option of blocking off double as much ground as they would be entitled to for an ordinary claim, providing that they duly represented it. I do not think it was the intention of the Act to give a man double ground, as well as the advantage gained in having a frontage claim. To my mind a frontage claim should be marked precisely the same as an ordinary claim, always allowing the 1,000yd. to represent the width. If the marking of an ordinary claim was so altered as to give each man in a party 100ft. along the course of a lead, it would be much fairer than at present arranged: clause 12 might then stand as it is. With regard to marking an ordinary claim, you will see, by referring to the table appended to clause 9, that each man in a party over two gets much less ground than he is entitled to. Providing a lead should be only 60ft. wide, surely the intention of the Act was to give a man 100ft. of auriferous ground, and not, as it sometimes is the case, only an amount ranging—according to the table referred to—from 26ft. to 44ft. I notice in clause 13, relative to marking river or creek claims, a man gets the full 100ft. along its course; so that it seems somewhat of an anomaly that old creek-beds, which happen to be covered up by a high terrace, should be marked differently. I think a man should be entitled to 100ft. of auriferous ground, marked in any way that will best secure that amount. I do not see the necessity for the table alluded to at all. The next matter I should like to refer to is the fact that, in Otago, fifteen or sixteen years ago, certain districts which were known to be well worked, so that the cream of the gold was gone, were pro26

claimed poor districts, so that each holder of a miner's right could occupy an acre without any survey or other conditions as are mentioned in clause 11 relating to extended claims."

He might mention that £3 per annum was enforced by the regulation, and the regulation also enforced a survey of these claims, which had to be made by a District Surveyor, and he had known three or four months elapse before miners could get a survey made. The cost was an unnecessary cost, because it was quite sufficient to put pegs in, without having a survey at all. That was what was alluded to in the letter:—

"I think the time has arrived when every facility should be extended to the miner, so as to make him assume the character of a settler as much as his avocation will allow, and not keep shifting him from one end of the country to the other, oftentimes a penniless beggar."

These were the reasons for bringing forward this question. He thought he had given sufficient information to the Minister, and would point out that, unless he took advantage of the days they had to sit, he would be too late, as, if they adjourned within the next fortnight, those regulations would not become law. There was a Mines Act before the House, and for that reason he asked for an immediate answer.

Mr. BALLANCE said he was thankful to the honourable member for the information he had given. He understood the question to be, whether the Government were prepared to extend the power of appeal from the decisions of the Gold Felds Wardens. He did not think it was desirable to give undue facilities for litigation, and large powers were now given under the Mines Act. However, it was impossible to draw up regulations at this period of the session, and they would have to be carefully considered during the recess. If it were found desirable to increase the power of appeal against the decisions of Wardens, it would be necessary to bring down regulations next session.

Mr. SEDDON said there was a power of appeal given where the Wardens sat judicially; but this referred to proceedings where the Warden sat in his ministerial capacity.

Mr. STOUT said that a power of appeal from decisions given by the Warden in his ministerial discretion had never been given.

ST. JOSEPH'S ORPHANAGE.

Mr. WAKEFIELD asked the Government, Whether they will make some provision, on the public works estimates or otherwise, for supplying urgent needs in the building of St. Joseph's Orphanage, at Wellington? The fact has been brought to his notice that the Orphanage at Wellington was in an exceedingly dilapidated condition, being scarcely waterproof. It was thirty years old. It was employed to a certain extent as a public building; it was the only orphanage in this part of New Zealand; and every day he believed the necessity for having an orphanage in one or other of the Cook Strait settlements was becoming more pressing. He therefore thought it would

Mr. Seddon

be a good thing to draw the attention of the Government to the matter, and ask whether, in one form or another, they could see their way to have some slight repairs done to this building without delay.

Mr. STOUT replied that this question of St. Joseph's Orphanage, Wellington — which was a private institution managed by the Catholic Church—had been brought before the Cabinet and himself, as Minister of Education, by the honourable member for Te Aro on more than one occasion. In fact, the honourable member for Te Aro had been not unduly but very persistent in asking for a grant for this purpose; but the Government really had no funds to devote to this object. If they were to give building grants to an orphanage connected with one Church, they would have to do the same throughout the colony.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—Are there orphanages connected with any other Churches?

Mr. STOUT said there were. The Church of England Bishop in Dunedin had an orphanage of his own. If they accepted the principle that they were to aid private institutions that looked after their own poor, they would have to give aid not now given out of the Consolidated Fund. He had no doubt whatever that this was a very deserving orphanage, and, from what he could gather, it had done a great deal of good in looking after poor waifs and strays in this and other places. But there was a large principle involved in this, and he was sorry they could not see their way to give the aid first asked for by the honourable member for Te Aro.

POLICE PROSECUTIONS.

Mr. BROWN asked the Minister of Justice, If he is aware that the police are instructed, by persons other than the Minister of Justice or the Attorney-General, to abstain from the prosecution of felonies, where an alleged act of felony has been reported by the police, and when the District Inspector is of opinion that a prosecution should ensue; and whether he will, where such interference has occurred, inform the Inspector that he is to perform his civil duties subject only to the directions of the Minister of Justice or the Attorney-General? In answer to a question put by him in 1882 he received a reply from the Minister of Justice to the effect that in no case were the police interfered with in that respect by the Crown Prosecutor; but he was informed that this afternoon a report had been laid on the table of the other Chamber stating that such interference had taken place, whereby a miscarriage of justice had occurred.

Mr. TOLE replied that the question did not indicate any particular case, and he was not aware that the police had been instructed to abstain from prosecuting in any case. In answer to the second part of the question, he would say that, if any case of such interference came under his notice, he would make due investigation, and regard it as his duty to see that the course of justice was not impeded.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYÉS.
On the motion of Mr. GUINNESS, it was redered, That a return be laid before this

erdered, That a return be laid before this House showing—(1) The number of hours that Government employés are required to work in the several departments; (2) the amount, if any, that has been paid for overtime during the year ended 31st March, 1884, to Government employés.

# WELLINGTON COLLEGE RESERVES CONFIRMATION BILL.

Mr. STOUT, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said that it was simply carrying out a promise of—in fact, he might say action taken by—the Provincial Government of Wellington, and consented to by three or four Ministries. In 1876 reserves were marked on the official map of the district and ordered to be Crown-granted, but through some mistake in the office the Crown grants were never issued. The reserves formed part of the Township of Fitzherbert and of the Township of Palmerston; but at the time they were made they formed part of the Crown lands of the colony, and were not included in the reserves for those townships. They were afterwards marked on the map as reserves for the educational purposes of the colony. They were never reserved for borough purposes or for any other purpose, until reserved for college purposes. He therefore could not see how there could be any objection to the Bill, as it only carried out promises made by previous Governments.

Mr. SHRIMSKI thought the House ought to be careful, in passing this Bill. It was de-priving the outlying districts of that which they were entitled to, and he did not think they should endow Wellington and deprive the outlying districts of what rightly belonged to them. It was not to be expected that any one in the outlying districts would be in a position to send his child to Wellington to share in the benefits that would accrue from these endowments. He did not think that the Government was altogether right in taking charge of Bills which were introduced by private members. This Bill was introduced into the other branch of the Legislature, and he saw the name of Mr. Brandon attached to it. It would have been more in keeping with the proper custom if Mr. Brandon had handed his Bill over to some Brandon had handed his Bill over to some private member of the House. This was establishing a bad precedent—opening the way to passing measures through the House without their receiving that attention they required, on account of being taken charge of by the Government. If he had a Bill for a similar purpose which he wanted to get passed he should certainly ask the Government to take there of it heaves when Bills were taken. charge of it, because when Bills were taken charge of by the Government they generally passed through the House without much observation or obstruction.

Mr. MACARTHUR had to oppose the second reading of this Bill; and he did so under considerable difficulty. The honourable member for Oamaru had just now observed that he

thought it would be very much better for private members to bring in measures of this description. He would recall the honourable gentleman's mind to the fact that the honourable member for Thorndon asked that the second reading should be fixed for that day, but somehow or other, in the interval between that time and now, the charge of the Bill had been transferred to the Premier. It appeared to him, therefore, that the motives for bringing in this Bill were not very good, when the Premier had to take charge of it. The honour-able member for Thorndon had evidently been afraid to allow the Bill to stand on its own merits, and therefore the Premier's influence was brought to bear upon its passage through the House. The honourable member for Thorndon had more parliamentary experience than he (Mr. Macarthur) had, and he would have been quite able to take charge of the Bill him-self. In opposing this Bill he felt that he was opposing an antagonist with whom he was not able to cope. He hoped that the House would carefully consider the merits of the case, and not decide on it hastily. It was well known amongst honourable members that there was a very strong feeling against granting these reserves for higher education. Speaking on the general question, these endowments were simply for the benefit of the larger towns. The people in the country had no chance of availing themselves of the benefits accruing from these reserves, which were taken away from the districts to which they belonged and handed over to the large towns, which reaped the whole of the benefits from them. was not one of those who opposed higher education; but the large towns ought not to ask to be provided with endowments at the expense of the country districts. The Premier had stated that this Bill was brought in on account of the pledges made by previous Governments. The whole matter turned upon this: The Superintendent of Wellington, in 1876, just before the provinces were abolished, tried, with great zeal for the town in which he was interested, to get Crown grants drawn up for these reserves; but, because he had not the legal power to issue them, they were never issued. The Superintendent went a little further than he had any power to go. It was found he had not the legal power to issue those Crown grants; and yet they were told that, because the Superintendent had made a promise which was ultra vires, the Government felt bound to carry out the promise. the Government do the same thing in other cases? If an official did that which he had no power to do, he (Mr. Macarthur) submitted that a higher power had no right to validate an illegal proceeding, unless it was shown that some injustice had been done inadvertently. It was a question whether the subject of higher education should be dealt with by the State at He contended that these reserves should not be taken away from the Town of Palmerston. Even if the railway from Palmerston to Wellington were made, the Palmerston people would not send their children to the Welling-

ton College, because they could get as good an education at the Wanganui College, which was When one-half of Palmerston was set up for sale, a large reserve was set apart for the use of the township. This large reserve was exhibited at three successive auctions in 1866 and 1867, showing that these reserves were for the use of the township. Some years afterwards the Government took it upon themselves to put up some of these reserves for sale. protest was entered against that by the inhabitants of the place, and that protest was laid before Mr. Fitzherbert, the Superintendent, and Mr. Bunny, the Provincial Secretary. The Government had previously sold one-half of the town, on the faith that these sections should be reserved for the use of the township. It was thus a distinct breach of faith on the part of the Government to offer it for sale. The land was sold, however, and the reserve thereby very much reduced. A short time afterwards, when some more land was being surveyed, the surveyor consulted some of the leading people of the place with regard to the reserves, and it was suggested that these sections which were now proposed to be given to the Wellington College should be called "the College Reserve." That was done, and upon that the Wellington College founded its claim to the reserve. It was so called, looking forward to the time when Palmerston might have a college of its own for the education of its children,—not thinking at all of the Wellington College. The Superintendent made an effort to get these reserves granted to the Wellington College, and, had it not been for its being discovered that the Crown grants were illegal, they would have been issued and the matter settled. They got so far as to get the Crown grants signed. In 1876 the Superintendent withdrew these lands from sale. He then wrote to the General Government the following letter:

"Superintendent's Office,

"Wellington, 4th March, 1876. "SIR,-I have the honour to request that His Excellency the Governor may be moved to grant the setting-apart of the undermentioned waste lands of the Crown for educational purposes in connection with the Wellington College and the Education Board of this province, as provided under 'The University Endowment Act, 1868,' and 'The Wellington Education Reserves Act, 1871,' as a means of advancing the efforts now being made to place the Governors of the College and the Education Board in a position that will the better enable them to meet the very large and pressing demands on their very limited funds.

"In anticipation of your answer, I have this day withdrawn the lands referred to from sale

by Proclamation.

"The detailed schedule and maps herewith will furnish the means for ascertaining the locality of the proposed reserves.—I have, &c., "WM. FITZHERBERT,
"Superintendent.

"The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, "Wellington."

Mr. Macarthur

On the 12th April, 1876, the answer was sent that it was found impossible, in the then state of the law, to make the reserve required, and that the whole matter was under the consideration of the Government. A short time afterwards, in some mysterious way, these grants were actually prepared and handed over to the Crown Lands Office; but, fortunately, the illegality was discovered in time, and they were not issued. It was attempted to found a claim upon the fact that the grants had been issued; and Dr. Giles, who was then Secretary for Crown Lands, wrote,

"In March, 1876, the Superintendent of Wellington requested the General Government to to reserve certain lands as endowments for the Board of Education and Wellington College. The Government was advised that no power existed to make the reserves as requested. The Superintendent was advised to that effect on the 6th and 13th July, 1876. Instructions were sent by the Under Secretary for Crown Lands to the Commissioner to prepare grants for the lands in question, both to the Education Board and to the Wellington College. The grants to the Education Board have been issued; but for those to the Wellington College no legal authority could be found. The Secretary to the Wellington College was informed to this effect on the 16th March, 1877. I cannot find any trace of the authority under which the Secretary for Crown Lands directed the preparation of the grants; but, in any case, his communication to the Commissioner was a communication within the department. The case therefore stands the department. The case therefore stands thus: The late Provincial Government withdrew certain lands from sale for the purpose of endowing the College with them. The General Government would have carried out this intention had there been any legal power to do

so, but there was not."

The Atkinson Government — in which the honourable member for Geraldine was Minister of Lands-brought in a Bill in 1881 to validate the act of the Superintendent. He contended that, the act of the Superintendent being ultra vires from the beginning, there could be no right to these reserves; and the question was, whether the Legislature intended to give these endowments to an institution from which the people of Palmerston could derive no advantage. The whole history of this thing was very peculiar. In 1878 a Bill was brought in, similar to the present Bill, confirming this grant of certain reserves. These reserves were mentioned in a Proclamation by the Superintendent in 1876; and these sections in the district he represented were omitted from that Bill. There was a good deal of difficulty then about the Wellington College, and it was thought then, and was proved to be the case, that a great deal of opposition was offered to the confirmation of these reserves in another branch of the Legislature. The reserves he was now speaking of were omitted from the Act of 1878, thereby showing that the promoters of the measure were afraid to ask for too much at that time, and were desirous of getting the reserves in instalments.

In 1881, in 1882, in 1888, and now in 1884 they asked that the title to the sections which had been omitted should be confirmed. When the Bill was introduced in another place the words "accidentally omitted" were used; but, when the Bill was next brought down, the word "accidentally" was left out. He believed they had some scruples of conscience, and felt that they were making an exorbitant request. The whole matter rested upon the question as to whether the Legislature was prepared to give endowments for higher education or not: it was not at all a question of former grants made by the Superintendent of Wellington. They had the reservation of three thousand acres of land confirmed by the Act of 1878, and now about a thousand acres more were asked for in this Bill. He contended that it was not desirable that the Wellington College should have these reserves confirmed—reserves situated in a district that received no benefit whatever from the insti-tution. When the honourable member for Thorndon asked that the Bill should be set down for second reading there was a report received that the Standing Orders had not been complied with. That neglect was of a piece with the whole proceedings in regard to this matter. He did not complain about that. The Bill was read a first time in another place although the Standing Orders had not been complied with. The Premier had stated that there had been only an omission of two daysthat it was merely a technical matter; but, if these omissions were allowed, advantage might be taken of them, and ultimately the Standing Orders would be neglected altogether. It was stated that the inhabitants had notice, because they had petitioned against the Bill. The petition was prepared when the first reading came on in the Council, and it showed on the face of it that it had been prepared in a hasty manner, because it did not set forth the real reason why the reserve should not be granted to the Wellington College. The Wellington College refused to pay the rates; they never acknowledged their liability in any way, until, now that the land had become more valuable, they tried to get it by this Bill. Having hitherto repudiated their obligations in regard to the land, the whole matter should be commenced de novo. He should most strenuously oppose the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. MACANDREW was considerably impressed with the speech of the honourable member for Manawatu, and the House was to be congratulated upon having a new member who could state his case so clearly as the honourable gentleman had done. He under-stood it was his maiden speech to the House. As this Bill must go before the Waste Lands Committee, where the whole matter would be inquired into and evidence taken, he would suggest to the honourable member that he should allow the Bill to be read a second time. When the Bill came back from the Committee, if the honourable member was not satisfied, he could then take up the adverse position he was now taking.
Mr. ROLLESTON agreed with the honour-

able member for Port Chalmers that the honourable member for Manawatu had handled his case very well; but he was sorry that he could not support him in his opposition to this Bill. It was only due to himself to say what he knew upon this subject. The honourable member for Port Chalmers, when a Minister, had promised that this reserve should be given.

Mr. MACARTHUR said the honourable member for Port Chalmers had made no distinct promise. The Superintendent was asked to show that the College had a legal right to the land, which had not been done.

Mr. ROLLESTON said the letter conveyed to the parties concerned the impression that the Government would carry out what the Superintendent had promised and intended should be done. The facts were simply these: This reserve never in any sense belonged to the Town of Palmerston; it was never anything but Crown land. The Superintendent did nothing illegal. This land was open for sale, and, although the Superintendent was never averse to getting money, either from Crown land or in any other way, for carrying on the work of the province, instead of selling the land he withdrew it from sale for a certain purpose. wrote to the Government asking them to carry out the purpose for which the land was withdrawn from sale. If the Superintendent had not withdrawn the land from sale, it would have been sold and have gone into private hands, instead of becoming a reserve for educational purposes; and he would have had the money. When it became a reserve, it was in somewhat the same position as the sections sold. There was no reason why the Wellington College should not be in the same position in regard to this land as the holders of the land sold when the land was cut up. A number of sections were cut up and sold, and a recreation reserve was also made, adjoining the reserve for the College. He must say the honourable member for Manawatu was to be congratulated upon the clever way in which he had handled this subject. The honourable gentleman appealed to the few members of the House who objected to reserves for secondary education. That was outside the question as to whether the Government were morally bound to carry out the liability of the province, which was incurred with their consent. He considered the Government would be committing a breach of faith if they did not carry out the granting of this reserve entirely irrespective of the question as to whether there should be reserves for higher education or not. Three Governments had gone carefully into the question, and two or three Committees had gone carefully into it; and he thought no amount of argument could do away with the facts of the case, or with the propriety of the Government appropriating this land for

the object originally intended.

Dr. NEWMAN said the honourable member for Manawatu had certainly made out a very good case, from his own point of view; but what were the real facts? In 1876 this land was absolutely granted by Mr. Fitzherbert, who was then Superintendent of the provincial district; [HOUSE.]

but, owing to some carelessness on the part of the person who prepared the Proclamation, the land was accidentally omitted. The late Mr. Holdsworth, who was then Chief Commissioner of Crown Lands, admitted that the land was accidentally omitted from the schedule by the clerk. The Wellington College had to get the title to this land, but, owing to some technical quibble, was unable to do so. One of the mem-bers for the District of Wellington brought in a Bill five or six years ago; but, owing to some carelessness, this reserve was omitted by the person who drafted the measure. was written by the honourable member for Port Chalmers when Minister of Lands which distinctly stated that the land should be given to the College, and that the Government were in favour of that course being adopted. A member of the Vogel Ministry in 1870 was in favour of it, and a Bill had been brought in for this purpose. The present measure had passed through the Upper House, after having been carefully considered. The whole matter had been carefully considered, and there could be no question that this land was rightfully, except in a technical point of view, the property of the Wellington College. The honourable member for Manawatu would lead the House to believe that they were going to get something new; but that was not the case. He had no doubt in his own mind that it could be shown to the satisfaction of the Waste Lands Committee that the land really belonged to the Wellington College, and that the Governors of that institution should receive a title to it. The honourable member for Manawatu stated that the College had refused to pay rates in respect of this reserve; but the College could not pay rates on land to which it had not a legal title: it would not be justified in paying any money in that way. When the sections were first cut up for sale in the Township of Palmerston a street adjoining this particular reserve was laid off and called College Street; and the present Mayor of Palmerston North did not raise any objection to the claim of the College to this He hoped that, having had the endowment. sanction of three Governments and of the other branch of the Legislature, this House would now affirm the intention by carrying this Bill.

Mr. SEDDON moved, That the Bill be read a second time that day six months; and thought he should be able to give reasons why that course should be adopted. He knew the land in question, and had taken trouble to make himself acquainted with the facts connected with the matter. He hoped that the honour-able member for Manawatu would not be led away by the advice of the honourable member for Port Chalmers, who, while flattering the honourable member on his speech, urged him to allow the Bill to go before the Waste Lands Committee. Such a course would simply be destructive of the effect of the speech. The honourable member for Port Chalmers and the honourable member for Geraldine, who were both members of the Waste Lands Committee, were in favour of the reserve going to the College; and, if the Bill were sent to the Waste

Lands Committee for inquiry and report, the result would not be satisfactory to the honourable member for Manawatu.

Mr. MACARTHUR would like to set the honourable member right on one point, and that was in reference to the opinion of the honourable member for Port Chalmers. would read a letter and a memorandum, to show exactly what was the honourable mem-

ber's position. The letter was as follows:—
"With reference to the question of certain proposed reserves which, in the year 1876, you, as Superintendent of the Province of Welling-ton, desired should be made an endowment for Wellington College, and to a subsequent request on behalf of the College that Crown grants should be issued for such lands, I shall be much obliged if you will be good enough to indicate any legal authority under which, in your opinion, the reserves in question could be Crowngranted. I need not say that the Government has always been desirous of giving effect to the endowment proposed by you in favour of the College, but is advised that there is no legal authority for the issue of the grant."

Then, there was a memorandum in the handwriting of the honourable member for Port Chalmers, which was as follows:

"Should the advice be sound, the Government will be prepared to recommend that authority to issue the Crown grant may be

given by the Legislature."

Mr. SEDDON said it was evident that the documentary evidence in existence was against the convictions of the honourable member for Port Chalmers. His memory had proved defective, and the honourable member for Geraldine had certainly misrepresented the fact when he led the House to believe that the honourable member for Port Chalmers had made a definite promise to give the reserve to the Wellington College; for the honourable member had only said he would issue the grant if it were right to do so. There was a sufficient answer to that in the fact that this Bill was now before the House. The honourable member for Geraldine, in his remarks, had alluded to the fact that the late Superintendent of Wellington was at all times desirous of obtaining money by the sale of Crown lands, and was not likely to reserve land that was intended to be sold; but it did not follow that, because this land was reserved from sale, therefore it was reserved with any specific object such as was alleged. There was no evidence of that fact before the House. It was quite customary in all the provincial districts for the Superintendents for the time being to withdraw land from sale, and name reserves for certain purposes; but, if any particular body had claimed a reserve on that account, it would not have been likely to get it. The purposes of reserves were changed every day, as might be seen on reference to any Gazette; and, if the Superintendent had named this land as a College reserve, that was no reason why, eight or nine years afterwards, the reserve should be claimed by a particular body. The honourable member for Geraldine said that the honourable member

Dr. Newman



for Manawatu had made an appeal to the sympathies of those in the House who were opposed to secondary education; but it might very fairly be replied that the honourable member for Geraldine was anxious that this Bill should pass because he was afraid, if it did not, the circumstance might strengthen those who had designs on the valuable educational reserves in the South Island. The honourable member for Geraldine and others were afraid of this, and hence they said, "We must pass this Bill at all hazards; we must resist the sympathetic appeal of the honourable member for Manawatu." Then, the honourable member for Geraldine further said that three successive Governments had decided that the Wellington College was entitled to this land. But there was not much in that argument, because every one knew what pressure could be brought to bear upon any Government by the Wellington people, especially by the wealthier people those who were interested in higher education. But, if three successive Governments had been in favour of it, why was the House now dis-cussing the matter? It was a strange thing that, after a strong Government such as that of which the honourable member for Geraldine had been a member had been in office for five years, this matter had not been settled, and the House was now called on to discuss it. Did not that prove that there was something wrong? He said unhesitatingly that it did. If there had been a good case for the College Governors claiming this land, how was it that the grant had not been issued? The honourable member never went into a history to show to how it was that the Bill he introduced was rejected or was not carried. Wanting that explanation, the conclusion he (Mr. Seddon) arrived at was that a majority of the House was against the Bill on good grounds. With the honourable member for Manawatu, he thought it strange that the Premier should have charge of this Bill. If he were a member for any of the Wellington electoral districts he would resent this slight. What he did resent was that the Premier should be so pliable to Wellington in-fluences. He thought the occurrences of the last few days, at all events, should be sufficient to cause the Premier to refuse to act as special pleader for such a measure. Perhaps the reason was that the Premier thought the Government of which he was a member in 1878 was in some manner connected with the question. If so, the letter read by the honourable member for Manawatu proved that the Premier was mistaken in his conclusion. The honourable member for Thorndon had admitted his own inability to carry this measure through the House, knowing that his case was so rotten and bad that he had no chance; and the speech he had made would condemn it in toto, because there was a suspicion attached to every word he uttered. He commenced by saying that five years ago, through gross carelessness, this land had not been included in a certain notice, and therefore had not been handed over to the College Governors. It was strange that this should be pure accident,

after the pledges they claimed to have had from the Superintendent, and that some unfortunate underling or clerk should be the cause of this wrong. The honourable member went on to say that on the second occasionstrange to say—a portion of the same block was Crown-granted to the Governors, but unfortunately these thirty-two acres were again, through carelessness, left out. How very un-fortunate the Governors of this College had been! He believed that all this had been done not accidentally, but from the best of motives; and it was owing to that fact alone that three successive Governments, though apparently agreeing that this should be handed over, had not taken steps to do so. The statement that the honourable member for Port Chalmers was a consenting party to the Bill was sufficiently answered by the memorandum read by the honourable member for Manawatu. The College Governors had utterly failed to make out a good claim to the land. Another phase of the question that he objected to was this: The honourable member for Thorndon told them-as if any member did not know it before—that this Bill was first passed in another Chamber. was nothing strange in that. When they considered the relative representation Wellington had in another place, what he should be surprised at would be if they had not passed the Bill. If, after so many years had elapsed, they were to go back and carry out an alleged promise made by a Superintendent some eight or tenyears ago, where would that sort of thing end? The question must arise, Were they to deal with the matter as it appeared before them this afternoon, or were they to go back nine years and deal with it from that date? They were advancing in legislation, and, he hoped, in administration, and, if they were to be bound by promises made nine or ten years ago by Superintendents, he should like to know where it would end and what would be the liabilities. The honourable member for Thorndon contended that this land had been set apart for College purposes, because a street adjacent to this land had been called College Street. There were many colleges in New Zealand. The street might have been so named by an early settler in Palmerston who owned the land, who was a member of the local body, and who, having had the honour and pleasure of belonging to one of the Home colleges, wished to call the street "College Street" to remind him of his college days. He could not agree with the honourable member that that was any reason for giving this large block to the College Governors. In the vicinity of that land a large population has sprung up. The Mana-watu District was about the finest in New Zealand, and was sure to have a large population, and, under those circumstances, due precautions should be taken to make provision for that population. Comparing the requirements of the inhabitants of the district with those of the Governors of the Wellington College, his vote would go in favour of the inhabitants of the district. Sufficient reserves had not been made for the district for recreation, hospital,

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and other purposes; and here was this large | piece of land in dispute, and which the Governors of the Wellington College, Shylock-like, said they would have, flesh, blood, and all. Under those circumstances his vote would go against them. It would have been far fairer if the Governors of the College had said to those in charge of the land that, as there was a dispute about the title, they would consent to a fair division. He believed he was correct in saying that the honourable member for Thorndon and the Hon. Mr. Brandon did agree that a portion of the land should be given to the borough for hospital purposes.

Dr. NEWMAN.—No; certainly not.

Mr. MACARTHUR said he had had a conversation with the honourable member for Thorndon, and that honourable gentleman had asked him to wire to his constituents to see if an agreement could not be come to. To that he replied that he would not wire unless some offer was made, and he understood that the honourable gentleman was ready to make an offer. He had heard nothing said about consulting the College Governors first, or he should not have wired.

Dr. NEWMAN said that some days ago the honourable member for Manawatu said to him that he would withdraw all opposition to the Bill if he would get the consent of the College Governors to take the thirty-two acres out of it; but nothing was said about the 800 acres. Again, on the previous day, in talking the matter over, it was suggested to him from another quarter that he should make the proposition to the honourable member for Manawatu to set apart a portion of the land, the first offer having come from that honourable gentleman. Then he said that he would submit such an offer to the Board of College Governors, because, as but a member of that Board, he was not in a position to come to any understanding. As the Bill was to come on that day, he had suggested to the honourable gentleman to telegraph to his constituents to ascertain their views; and in the meantime he himself saw the Hon. Mr. Brandon, who undertook to see the other Governors. He was not in a position to make any pledge, and he told the honourable member for Manawatu afterwards that the Governors declined to yield anything—that, as they had a good ground to go upon, they would appeal to Parliament, and would have the whole or

nothing.
Mr. MACARTHUR said the honourable gentleman had really upheld what he had said, that he would not wire to his constituents unless the honourable gentleman would submit an offer. He did not remember anything being said about consulting the College Governors, but the honourable gentleman said that he would see the Hon. Mr. Brandon. He told the honourable gentleman that the Hon. Mr. Brandon was in the library; and the honourable gentleman went to see him, and then came back and said, "Will you be content to take half?" To that he replied that he would wire to his constituents, and he had received a reply that day saying they would accept the offer.

He did not believe the honourable gentleman ever mentioned the Governors, and yet now he

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was bringing them in.

Mr. SEDDON said the explanations given by both honourable members must leave the impression on the minds of honourable gentlemen that an attempt had been made to come to an amicable settlement. The honourable member for Thorndon said that the first offer came from the honourable member for Manawatu. If it was so, then, as that honourable gentleman had a very good case, and as it was pretty well known that this Bill would be thrown out, the offer redounded greatly to his credit, and should have been at once accepted by the honourable member for Thorndon and the Hon. Mr. Bran-He felt convinced that the discoveries made subsequent to the offer led the College Governors to come to a different decision. According to the plans beside the Premier, it was understood that the land in dispute was within a certain boundary; but, after the matter had been placed in the hands of the Premier, that honourable gentleman, having considerable experience, and thoroughly understanding plans, discovered that the reserve claimed by the Borough of Palmerston North was outside the That was what led the honourable mcmber for Thorndon and the Hon. Mr. Brandon and the College Governors to say that they would accept no compromise. He maintained that that was scarcely honourable, and that the House should insist upon retaining certain portions of this land for the use of the colony. The borough only wanted a small portion for a site for a hospital. He had been through the district, and he knew that the Premier was wrong in the statement that the borough had a sufficient reserve for hospital purposes. If the Premier would look at the map by his side he would find there was no provision made for hospital purposes, and that the borough had not sufficient endowments to set apart a portion of land for this purpose. If the whole of this land were given to the Governors of the Wellington College, the result would be that the colony would have to purchase from private owners land for this district for hospital pur-poses. And now there was time for the Premier of the colony to insist that a portion of this land should be available for public purposes such as he had indicated, they found the Premier, in the face of the facts he (Mr. Seddon) had disclosed, and which would be confirmed if the Premier opened the plans and looked at them, giving this land away to the Wellington College, and leaving the present and future inhabitants of this important district totally unprovided for. He (Mr. Seddon) thought it would have been the first duty of the Government to have seen that provision was made for hospitals and other public purposes in that district. Such was not the case. He was fully under the impression that the Premier, upon the suggestion having been made by him (Mr. Seddon) that the Government would have to purchase land for hospital purposes, would have immediately said, in his place, "Very well: in Committee I will take some out of

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this land and make provision for hospital pur-poses." As the Premier had failed to do that, he (Mr. Seddon) must endeavour to find further arguments to convince the majority of the House that they had no right to pass the Bill unless this pledge were given. First of all, the strong argument he would use was that the land in question set apart at Palmerston the land in question set apart at Palmerston North could not possibly, for the purpose that it was intended to be set apart for, prove a very great benefit to the people of that district. No poor man could afford to send his children or any one belonging to him down to Wellington College. This Bill, if passed, was simply giving away the land which belonged to the great bulk of the people—to the masses—for the purpose of providing cheap education for the progeny of the rich, and for the benefit of people who were well able to, and the benefit of people who were well able to, and who should, pay for the education of their own children. It appeared as if those who were to enter professional life in New Zealand had to be educated by the State, and that the lands of the people were to be given to them. This was equal to a vote of the House being given from year to year for this purpose, and yet, at the same time, in this very district he alluded to, there was no provision made for higher or secondary education. There was no high school in the Manawatu District. He believed that, even with regard to the Wanganui District, the district high schools there had been closed.

And which, he would ask, had the greater claim on the consideration of the House? He held that the large body of the people had the best claim upon the House. He held that they had no right to keep on year after year passing laws that would continue a system which, to his mind, was a pernicious one. He held that the unsold lands of the colony belonged to the people; that the revenues derived from the reserves in the South Island should go into one common fund, and that all parts of the colony should be benefited by the revenues from these lands. He held that this piece of land which was mentioned in the Bill now under consideration belonged to the people of New Zealand, that it was untrammelled—there was no pledge sufficiently strong that he was aware of that it should be given to Wellington College. This was a local Bill, and had been advertised as such. If this measure became law it would mean that the Crown lands of New Zealand might be set apart for the special benefit of particular districts—those districts which could bring pressure to bear upon the Government of the day. In the position he now took up he was sure he was doing what was right for the people of the Manawatu District and the people of the colony. Some time ago he asked for a return showing the various reserves set apart in the several provincial districts for the puroses of higher education, and this reserve in Palmerston North was not shown in that return. If such a reserve was in existence, if three successive Governments had admitted it was a College reserve, it was strange that the late Government and the present Government should have sent in a return from which this

land was omitted altogether. He noticed from the return that Canterbury was particularly well favoured. The honourable member for Geraldine supported this Bill because he considered that self-preservation was the first law of nature. The honourable gentleman thought that, by preserving this piece of land to the Governors of the Wellington College, he would have a better chance of preserving the reserves that were set apart in Canterbury. The honourable member for Port Chalmers supported this Bill under the idea that he was going to pre-serve the reserves for higher education in the Otago Provincial District. He (Mr. Seddon) considered that the North Island had been, and was now, unjustly treated with regard to higher education. He also admitted that the Wellington Provincial District had not been well dealt with in the matter of higher education; but the introduction of this Bill was not the way to remedy the evil. The revenues derived from the education reserves throughout the colony should go into one general fund, and from that fund each part of the colony should be fairly and equally dealt with. If this measure were carried they would be flooded with Bills of a like character next session. What provision had been made for promoting higher education in the Westland District? Last year when they asked for bread they received a stone, and no provision was made for carrying on higher education in that district.

The hour of half-past five o'clock having arrived, Mr. Speaker left the chair.

#### HOUSE RESUMED.

Mr. Speaker resumed the chair at half-past seven o'clock.

SCHOOL COMMITTEES ELECTION BILL. On the motion for the third reading of this Bill

Mr. STOUT said he should not oppose the motion, for he recognized that it was useless to persist further with opposition to the measure. Indeed, in one respect the Bill in its amended form commended itself to him, because it affirmed a new principle in legislation, which he hoped would have a beneficial effect. He referred to that clause which conferred upon all persons, both men and women, of the age of twenty-one years, no matter how short a time they might have been resident in a district, the right to vote in the election of School Committees. That was giving females the franchiso in a most extended form, and he hoped before long to see an extension of the principle here admitted to the licensing elections. In that respect he approved of the Bill. As to the other provisions of the measure, he did not agree with them. He believed the Bill would be more unworkable than the present Act. Furthermore, he objected to the Bill because it was promoted by those who had no desire to see the present secular system of education maintained. There were, certainly, among those who supported the Bill in all stages, some honourable members who did not wish to see the present system interfered with; but he was convinced that those who had introduced the Bill and carried it through had done so for the purpose of taking one step towards the destruction of the secular system. The Bill was brought in with that avowed object and intention.

Mr. W. D. STEWART.-No.

Mr. STOUT said honourable members were perfectly well aware of the fact that, if the honourable member for Dunedin West had his way, the secular system of education would be destroyed. He very much regretted that the House, after the secular system has been in operation for only seven years, should have now, by passing this Bill, taken the first step towards destroying the system. He did not like the Bill, but he hoped the universal suffrage which was created under it would act as a kind of counterpoise to the evils which were in the Bill. He did not wish to take up the time of the House further-and he had not at any time offered factious opposition to the Bill—for the measure was supported by so large a majority that it would be useless to oppose it further; but he could only repeat his expression of regret that such a Bill should be passed, and put his protest on record, so that it might be seen hereafter.

Mr. ROLLESTON did not intend to go into the general features of the Bill, or to raise a debate on the third reading; but he wished to say this: that he disliked a "bogus" Bill, and The Bill had that was what this Bill was. which the House knew pretty well would secure its defeat in another place. He was sorry he could not agree with the Premier, with whom he generally agreed on education. He thought the amendments embodied in the 16th clause, defining "householders, such as would work most injuriously. Those amendments, as he understood them, enabled any School Committee, where there happened to be a gang of shearers, harvesters, or workmen of any kind, to bring those people in to vote as residents in the district. If that was what was meant by universal suffrage, the less they had of it the better. With regard to the education system, they wanted people whose franchise was education, and who were interested through their children, who would grow up under their system. To bring in people whose votes would swamp the elections was utterly abhorrent to the spirit of the education system. He did not like this Bill, because he thought any change made in one of the most important departments of the State ought to be made under the guidance and with the consent of the Ministry, and that any amendment which had not that sanction ought not to be passed. This Bill, to use an expressive, ugly phrase, was "a mess," and he hoped it would come to grief.

Mr. SHRIMSKI did not think he would be doing his duty if he did not move, That the Bill be read a third time that day three months. He entirely agreed with the honourable gentleman who preceded him, and thought this was the first blow against the education system,

which they had worked so hard for and in which they took so great an interest.

which they took so great an interest.

Mr. W. F. BUCKLAND, in seconding the amendment, agreed with every word spoken by previous speakers, and he would like the House to consider that this was really an insidious attempt to capsize their education system. It was brought in by honourable members who said, in an undertone, while the debate was going on, "It is a pity it was not capsized before." He thought they should really pause.

Mr. W. D. STEWART thought the Premier

was mistaken in supposing that all or even some of those who supported this Bill, which was purely a machinery Bill, were desirous of upsetting the present system of education. He, personally, would like to see an alteration in the present system, and he hoped the day was not far distant when an alteration would be made. What he protested against was this indescribable dread that some honourable members displayed of an alteration of the present system. It seemed to him that, if the system did not fairly represent the opinions of the people of the colony, the sooner it was altered the better. He ventured to say that, with regard to a large portion of the colony at any rate, this purely secular system did not fairly represent the opinions of the inhabitants. census of parents in Otago was recently taken, and the result was that, out of 5,276 parents who replied to the question of whether they were in favour of Bible-reading in schools, no less than 4,674 replied that they were in favour of it, whilst only 602 were opposed to it. Auckland were polled, he believed a great many would also be in favour of Bible-reading in schools; Napier, he believed, was also in favour of it; and he believed that in Nelson an association was about to be formed in favour of it. However, this Bill did not deal directly with that question. It was purely a machinery Bill, and dealt with a very important question, which was discussed last week - namely, whether minorities should be represented on these Committees while majorities were unrepresented. With regard to some of the remarks of the honourable member for Geraldine, as to this being "a bogus Bill," he (Mr. W. D. Stewart) was not aware that it was so, except that attempts were made during its passage through Committee to make it a bogus Bill. He acquitted that honourable gentleman of making such efforts, but others did. A bogus effort was quite successful in regard to the definition of "householder." No doubt that amendment was put in with a view to neutralizing the whole effect of the Bill; but the main part of the measure was that which simply dealt with the question of whether the vicious system of cumulative voting should be abolished, and the House, by an overwhelming majority, declared that it should be abolished; and he thought the House did right in that respect. With regard to the householders' qualification, he did not think the honourable member for Geraldine need be apprehensive that shearers would take such an interest in elections as to go from one district to another to influence elections.

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[HOUSE.]

As to such a Bill being introduced by the Government, they knew there was no chance—at all events while the Premier was in charge of the Education Department-of a Bill of this sort being introduced; and if the House was in favour of this particular alteration, he did not see why they should wait until a Minister got into effice who would take that view. Although they might approve of the policy of the Government generally, they were not called upon to coincide with the particular views of every member of the Ministry. He thought the honourable member for Waimate was to be commended for bringing in this Bill to abolish a system which had been a source of great annoyance and inconvenience in different parts of the colony.

Mr. MOSS said the honourable member for Dunedin West stated that those who were in favour of the present system of education seemed to have an indescribable dread of any interference with it. Such a dread was very easily understood when they saw the somewhat disingenuous attitude the honourable gentleman had taken up. He called this a machinery Bill. He (Mr. Moss) would not do the honourable gentleman's intelligence so little justice as to suppose that he really regarded it as a mere machinery Bill. Did a machinery Bill deal with the suffrage, or take away the cumulative Did a mere machinery Bill take away the power of appeal to the Education Boards, and make appeal more difficult by sending it to the Resident Magistrate? Did a mere machinery Bill propose to alter the term for which a Committee was elected? Those honourable gentlemen who were in favour of interfering with the present system of education showed remarkably little intelligence if they considered this to be a machinery Bill. He was afraid it was not a want of intelligence. He gave honourable gentlemen in favour of this Bill credit for more intelligence than they seemed to claim for themselves, and when they called this a machinery Bill they were simply seeking to impose upon honourable members by the use of the term. As members did not clearly know what amendments had been made in the Bill, he thought it would be wrong to pass He himself had taken an active part on it in Committee; but no one could say accurately what were the amendments which were ultitimately carried and made a part of the Bill. Seeing the great importance of the subject with which they were dealing, he hoped the Bill would not be allowed to pass. He thought the honourable gentleman in charge of it would only have shown fair consideration if he had had the Bill reprinted, so as to enable them to see what the actual amendments were.

Mr. LEVESTAM would support the third reading of the Bill, although he regretted some of the amendments which had been made in it. The honourable gentleman who spoke last charged those who supported this Bill with a want of intelligence. Now, he thought this was remarkably applicable to some of those remarks that had been made by honourable members who spoke on the other side.

He would particularly call attention to the remarks made by the honourable member for Dunedin West. That honourable gentleman wanted to show them that the people of the colony were in favour of an alteration of the Education Act, and he told them that, out of six thousand parents, some five thousand had signed a paper in favour of such a change; but he forgot altogether to tell the House out of how many parents of New Zealand those were chosen. He believed himself that the circulars were only sent to those known to be in favour of it; and, if the honourable member said that those six thousand were the whole out of six hundred thousand in New Zealand, his argument was entirely weak and untenable, and did not prove what it was intended to prove. The honourable gentleman made the further mistake which most persons who came from that part of the colony did, in thinking that Otago was New Zealand. He said also that the people of Napier and of Nelson were in favour of his views. The honourable gentleman ought to know that some years ago there was an election at Nelson and the contest was based simply on the question of whether the Education Act should be altered or not, and the gentleman who was in favour of the alteration, although the most popular man in the place, lost his election in consequence of his opinions on this point. As for the opinions of the people of Napier, the honourable gentleman said that they held the same opinions as he did; but he (Mr. Levestam) said that they did not, and, as the honourable gentleman had brought forward no proof to substantiate his statement, it simply resolved itself into a question of assertion, and therefore the statement was not worth much.

Mr. STOUT merely wished to emphasize the statement made by the honourable member for Dunedin West. That honourable gentle-man said that the people he represented did not believe in purely secular education in this Honourable members would therefore keep that in mind, and would know what the aim of the honourable member for Dunedin West and those who supported him was.

The House divided on the question, "That the word 'now' stand part of the question."

Grigg Allwright Barron Guinness  $\mathbf{Beetham}$ Bevan Joyce B.-Bradshaw Locke Brown Buchanan Cadman Cowan Duncan Fitzherbert Pyke Fraser

Gillies

AYES, 38. Samuel Shephard Hursthouse  $\mathbf{Smith}$ Sutter Levestam Taiaroa Te Ao Thomson, J.W. Macarthur McKenzie, J. White, W. McMillan Whyte, J. B.

Pearson Wilson. Tellers. Richardson, G. Steward, W. J. Ross Stewart, W. D.

Noes, 27.

Ballanco Dargaville Fergus Buckland, J. C. Hakuene

Hamlin Hatch Hobbs



[Oct. 23=

Lake O'Callaghan Stout Mackenzie, M. O'Conor Thompson, T. Mitchelson Ormond Trimble. Moat Richardson, E. Tellers. Buckland, W. F. Montgomery Rolleston Shrimski. Moss Russell Newman

## Majority for, 11.

Bill read a third time.

On the question, That the title be agreed to, Mr. SHRIMSKI said that the title ought to be altered into "An Act to repeal the Education Act."

Title agreed to.

#### DOG REGISTRATION BILL. IN COMMITTEE.

-Section 2 of Act of 1882 amended. Clause 2.-The Committee divided.

AYES, 22. Steward, W. J. Stewart, W. D. Ballance Gillies · Beetham Grigg Sutter Brown Guinness Bruce Hursthouse Wilson. Buchanan Lance Locke Tellers. Cowan McMillan Duncan Rolleston Whyte, J. B. Fitzherbert Samuel NoEs, 40. Levestam Russell Allwright Mackenzie, M. Seddon Barron McKenzie, J. Bevan Shephard B.-Bradshaw Mitchelson Shrimski Buckland, J. C. Moat Stout Montgomery Taiaroa Fergus Thompson, T. O'Conor Fraser Thomson, J. W. Hakuene Ormond Hatch Peacock Trimble Pearson White, W. Hobbs Pere Johnston Joyce Reese Tellers. Richardson, G. Buckland, W.F. Lake Larnach O'Callaghan. Majority against, 18.

Clause struck out.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD moved, That the Chairman do leave the chair.

Motion agreed to.

#### SOUTH ISLAND NATIVE RESERVES BILL.

Mr. TAIAROA, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said its object was to repeal so much of the legislation of 1883 as referred to the Native reserves of the South Island; and the reason was that the Natives of the South Island had seen the wrong brought about by the Act of 1883. The whole of the reserves in Motueka, and in other parts of the South Island, were leased under the terms of a lease which he held in his hand. They all came under the same provision. He would not speak at great length, but he would read the terms of the lease. When Mr. James Mackay was Commissioner of Native Reserves, this was the form of lease that was used. He would read the second part, and it was as follows :--

"The [owner] consents to the said block of land being demised to and held by the Commissioner of Native Reserves for the term of twenty-one years next ensuing, on consideration of the said Commissioner of Native Reserves paying the said [owner] a rental of £20 for each year during the term of twenty-one years above written. At the end of that period all houses,. gardens, fences, and the whole of the land to be given up to the said [owner], together with all their appurtenances belonging to the said block of land. The lease to commence from the 1st

January, 1861."

That form of lease was used on all occasions. But under the Reserves Act of 1883 the leases made formerly had been broken, and he thought that, if the Natives had the power tobring their grievances into a Court of law, they would get damages for the wrong which had been done to them. But he did not wish toallude to the wrongs which had been done formerly. He would be better satisfied if justice were done now. He did not want to go back upon the wrongs of the past. This form of lease, executed by the Governor, contained no clause about improvements, but the land and everything on it was to be returned to theowners at the expiration of the lease. terms of those leases had been broken by the law recently passed, and that law should be-repealed. Some honourable members had accused him of having consented to the passing of the Act. That was true; but he consented to certain provisions only. He had requested the Government to issue the Crown grants in accordance with the terms proposed by Mr. Young; but the Government replied that they would not consent to that being done. Certain honourable members—those from Greymouth went to the Government and urged them tobring down this new Act; and they threatened that, if the Government did not bring down that Act, they would vote against the Government. Unfortunately, at that time the party to which he (Mr. Taiaroa) belonged were not strong. They were very weak, and the strong party carried the day. It was well known that a weak party had no chance in that House. He would content himself with saying that the terms of the old leases should be adhered to. That was the only explanation he would make in moving the second reading of the Bill which he had brought before the House. He would not pay any attention to what the various Commissioners had written upon the subject, but he would rely entirely on the terms of the old leases. The terms of the old leases were not too favourable to the Natives. They only received a small rental. A Native would perhaps only get £20 a year for a section. After the lessee had been in occupation some time he would go to the owner and say the rent was too high, and ask him to take £10 a year. If the Native said No, then the lessee would say he would give £10 a year in rent and spend £10 a year in improvements. In one case £210 had been paid in rent, and £210 remained as improvements. Under the old law the Native would get the benefit of the £210 spent in improvements; but now improvement clauses were passed, and the tenant was to get the value of these. The Natives were in a state of great trouble concerning this matter. They were mourning like Rachael weeping over her children over this matter, and he thought the House should afford some relief to them. The reason why he asked that these clauses should be repealed was that all of them contained something more or less objectionable.

something more or less objectionable.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE would like to say a few words with reference to this Bill, as it was of much more general importance than appeared on the face of it. He thought the honourable member for the Southern Maori District had to a certain extent misled the House in the remarks he had made. He should like, for the benefit of the honourable gentleman, to read the opinion Mr. Taiaroa expressed last year on the committal of "The South Island Native Reserves Act, 1883." He was reported as follows:—

"Mr. Talaroa wished to make a few remarks, having been absent at the second reading of the Bill. It applied to the Greymouth reserves, in which, he might say, he was interested with his Native friends. In the first place he was in favour of this Bill because one of its objects was to issue Crown grants to the Native owners, carrying into effect the decision of the Commissioner who had considered those cases."

Further on he said,—
"He was quite willing to accept some arrangement by which something better could be done for both sides; and, so far as the Bill was concerned at present, if an amendment he would propose were inserted he would quite agree with the Bill: if the Native Minister would accept that amendment, he would have nothing more to say on the Bill, but, if not, he should be inclined to disagree with him. The amendment was,—

"'Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to imply that the Public Trustee shall be compelled to pay for any improvements erected, built, or made upon any leasehold, or take over any such improvements at a valuation at the expiration of any of the subsisting leases or of any future lease."

Then, he went on to say that, if that amendment were put into the Bill, he would support it, which he did. Then, to strengthen his argument and make himself right with his constituents, he read the following telegram:—

"'H. K. Taiaroa, Wellington.—We, who are the owners of these reserves, are agreeable to the Bill, and we further agree that the leases shall be extended for a further term of sixty years.' He was inclined to think that Tainui, the sender of the telegram, was under a slight misapprehension, because he had communicated with the Commissioner that they were perfectly willing to lease the sections upon which there were wooden houses for a term of twenty-one years, and the sections upon which there were stone houses for a term of sixty years."

He generally supported the Bill, after having made those statements. Now the honourable

gentleman came down and told the House that a great wrong had been done to the Natives. A very great wrong indeed would be done to a very large number of very deserving people in Greymouth and the District of Nelson, and no doubt in other parts of New Zealand, if this Bill were passed. The honourable gentleman had just now read the form of a lease between Turanga Peke and the Native Commissioner, and the honourable member represented that that was the form of lease between the Native Commissioner and the tenants of those Native trust lands. He did not wish for a moment to misrepresent the honourable gentleman, and he had not had time to prove the accuracy of that statement; but it seemed to him that the particular two pieces of land referred to in that lease did not come within the category of the land dealt with by "The South Island Native Reserves Act, 1883;" and, if he was rightly informed, the position of those reserves was this: that, in the early days of settlement, when the New Zealand Company purchased lands from the Natives in the Nelson District at all events, certain concessions were made to the Natives. and one of them was that every tenth section should be set aside as a reserve for the benefit of the Native race; and he believed that was Then, under some subsequent carried out. power, certain of those tenths were given to the Natives for their occupation and cultivation, and other portions of the tenths, or other sections of them, were set aside as inalienable reserves, to be administered as the company should from time to time direct; and, when the company handed over its liabilities to the Crown, the Crown, he presumed, took the powers which the company reserved to itself, and those reserves passed into the hands of the Native Commissioners for the time being, to be administered by them for the benefit of the Native race, and it was under the powers granted to the Commissioners by the Governor that the reserves had been administered up to the passing of the Act of 1882. As far as the people he represented were concerned, those reserves were administered by Mr. Alexander Mackay, a gentleman of very high reputation in the colony. who was not at all likely to let the interests of the Natives suffer at the hands of the Europeans. In the agreements made between him and the tenants there was an unwritten law that, so long as those tenants cultivated the reserves in a reasonable and husbandmanlike manner, they would never be dispossessed of the property they had acquired. Mr. Mackay had stated that in evidence. In 1882 the House passed the Native Reserves Act, which took out of the power of the Commissioners the administration of those reserves, and placed it in the hands of a Board constituted under the Public Trust Act, consisting of the Public Trustee, the Commissioner of Annuities, the Auditor-General, the Colonial Treasurer, and two Native members, who might be appointed by the Governor. That Act went on to say that the Public Trustee, acting on behalf of this Board, at the expiration of all those leases, should call for tenders, or submit

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the leases to public auction, and let them to the highest bidder; and there was a clause in that Act which said that no promise or agreement legally made between the Native Commissioner and any tenant should be pre-judicially affected by the Act of 1882. Then judicially affected by the Act of 1882. Then it turned out that the promises made by Mr. Mackay in dealing with those reserves, although not incorporated in the leases—as they ought to have been-were made illegally, or he made them assuming that he had power under the authority conferred on him by the Governor to grant renewals of those leases, and so induced the people to improve their properties on the understanding that they would get a renewal of the lease s whenever they ran out. To prove that he was not overstating the case, he might say that, on the effect of the Act of 1882 becoming known, the people he represented presented a petition, which was referred to the Native Affairs Committee; and he would read their report. As far as his memory served him, the honourable member for the Southern Maori District supported him in that report. Mr. A. Mackay attended that Committee, and gave evidence which apparently satisfied the Native members of it. The report was as follows :-

"Petitioners state that for many years they have occupied Native trust lands at Motueka and Riwaka, at heavy rents; that upon the faith of their leases being renewed they have made improvements and built houses; and that they believe the value of their improvements will be confiscated at the expiry of their leases by the provisions of 'The Native Ro-serves Act, 1882.' They pray that 'The Native Reserves Act, 1882, may be amended by in-corporating with it the provisions as to leasing contained in 'The Land Act 1877 Amendment Act, 1882.'

"I am directed to report as follows:-

"That the Committee is of opinion that the interests of the petitioners have been materially affected by 'The Native Reserves Act, 1882.' In dealing with the trust lands which they occupy there was always an understanding that the tenants should have a renewal of their leases, upon paying such reasonable advance in rent as the general increase in the value of the land might warrant, and leaving to them the value of their own substantial improvements. Under this tacit agreement, which was one of honour and not of law, the tenants have greatly improved their holdings, not only by superior husbandry, but by building, fencing, draining, &c., and have thus much increased even the value of the freehold. The holdings are small, ranging from about five to fifty acres, and the rents are already very high, reaching as much as £1 to £2 per acre per annum. This increased value has arisen from the labour of the tenants them-selves. Under 'The Native Reserves Act, 1882,' their customary interest is annihilated, and the Public Trustee will be bound, on the termination of each lease, to put up the land to public competition and to get the highest

Mr. Hursthouse

not contemplated by the Legislature. tenants do not seek for perpetual leases at present rents. They only ask that that part of the property which is of their own creation should be secured to them by law, and point out that if the provisions of 'The Land Act 1877 Amendment Act, 1882,' were incorporated with 'The Native Reserves Act, 1882,' they would be satisfied. The Committee recommends this matter to the attention of the-Government, with a view to early legislation towards meeting the equitable claims of tenants of all Native reserves leased prior to-the coming into operation of 'The Native Re-serves Act, 1882.'"

That was the deliberate opinion of a judicial body - the Select Committee on Native Affairs; and he ventured to think it was not a lightly-formed opinion on one side or on the other. Acting upon that report, he presumed, the Government last year, when Mr. Bryce was Native Minister, introduced and passed "The South Island Native Reserves Act, 1883." After making special provision for issuing Crown grants to certain individuals in regard to the Greymouth reserves, it went on to make provision for the payment to tenants at the expiration of their leases, should they not be the successful tenderers, for the value of their improvements by the incoming tenants, and also provided, in accordance with the express wish of the honourable member (Mr. Taiaroa), that the Public Trustee, acting on behalf of the Natives, should not in any case be called upon to pay out of receipts from rents for any improvements, should the land not be relet at any time; so that the Natives were absolutely excluded from any detrimental effect by the pass-This was a matter which ing of that Act. deeply interested a large section of the community which he represented; and, in response to their requests and in conformity with his own views, he had introduced a Bill this session granting to the tenants a prior right of renewal of their leases at a rate to be fixed by the Public Trustee, acting on behalf of the The debate on that Bill had been adjourned at the request of the honourable member for the Southern Maori District to-allow the Bill to be interpreted; and whether that interpretation had affected the honourable gentleman or not he did not know, but evidently the measure now before the House was brought in for the purpose not only of defeating the facilities which he (Mr. Hursthouse) proposed to give, but also of repealing the whole of the provisions of the Act of 1883, which was passed on the recommendation of the Native Affairs Committee, and with the consent of the Native Minister of the day, and supported by him and the Natives. He hoped the House would give the matter its earnest consideration, and would not pass this

Sir G. GREY said that the honourable gentleman who had moved this Bill had requested him to move the adjournment of the debate, and had done so from a sense of the rent procurable. This is a hardship which was great interests of both the Europeans and the Natives who were mixed up in these leases. The honourable gentleman felt that the matter was one of great concern, and was unwilling to press it on at this late period of the session. The honourable gentleman was anxious that it should receive the earnest attention of both races during the recess, and hoped that then it would receive due consideration from Parliament next session. Expressing his admiration of the manner in which the honourable gentleman had acted, he begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. GUINNESS begged to second the motion for the adjournment of the debate, and did so because, if the discussion had gone on, he would have had to say a good deal in answer to the arguments brought forward in support of the present measure, and to state to the House the reasons why the Act of 1883 was passed. A great deal could be said in opposition to the principle of the Bill; but he fully recognized the spirit which had actuated the honourable gentleman in charge of it in asking the honourable member for Auckland East to move the adjournment of the debate. would give full opportunity to both Natives and Europeans interested in the matter to fully consider it during the recess; and he hoped that next session they would be able to deal with it in such a manner as to do justice to both parties.

Debate adjourned.

# PRINTERS AND NEWSPAPERS REGISTRATION BILL.

Sir G. GREY, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said it was intended to remedy evils which at any moment might spring up in this colony. Under the Printers and Newspapers Registration Act at present in force any person publishing or distributing any printed matter without the name and the place of abode—not of business—of the printer and publisher being affixed, was liable to a penalty of not less than £5 or more than £25 for the first twenty-five copies distributed; and an information could be laid against him by any informer, who was to receive half the penalty. In Great Britain the law was that the penalty should not exceed £5, and no person except the Attorney-General or Solicitor-General could prosecute: thus none but a person whom the public interests required to be prosecuted could be proceeded against. This Bill would assimilate our law to that in force in Great Britain, and would relieve may persons who were now hold they had innocently incurred.

Mr. STOUT saw no objection to the Bill passing, as it assimilated the law to that in force in Great Britain. He rose merely to correct a misreport, which he had seen in some of the southern papers, of some remarks which he had made on the first reading, or on the motion for fixing the second reading. Some newspaper correspondent, who did not understand badinage, must have taken in earnest what he had said about special correspondents signing their names to their communications,

and had said that he was going to bring in some very drastic measure to compel that sort of thing. He could only say that, as far as he was concerned, he did not wish to see anything of the sort carried out, because special correspondents, if they were accustomed to their duties, would not require to be told how they should act. He had no objection to the second reading: in fact, he thought that further steps should be taken in reference to dealing with newspapers than those proposed by the Bill. It seemed to him that laws which had been passed by that House had put difficulties in the way of newspapers being published. For example, there was the telegraph tariff, which no doubt had prevented the starting of many newspapers; and then there was the law which they had passed some years ago, and which had had the effect of establishing a tradeunion of the very worst description. He was sorry they could not deal with that matter now, but he hoped that some day it would be done.

Bill read a second time.

On the motion for the third reading of the Bill,

Mr. JOYCE desired to say a few words in opposition to the measure. He looked upon it as a most dangerous relaxation of a law that had not been found oppressive. At present every printer had to attach his name and residence to everything he might print, and it was open to any person in the employ of that printer to bring an information against him and subject him to a heavy penalty. That was a most wholesome check. This Bill provided that there should be circumlocution, and the result would be that, even where there was great provocation, very few prosecutions would be instituted. The law was exceedingly severe against the offence called murder, but offences equally heinous might be committed by means of the Press, noble engine as it was. A great deal more mischief might be done by any malicious man possessed of a small printing press than could be expiated by his death. The peace of mind of a great many people might be broken up, and yet under this Bill the criminal would escape scot-free. The House ought not hastily to relax a law that had not been found oppressive. At the times of election, even with the safeguards now possessed, many offensive things were circulated; and, if the House consented to make prosecutions difficult and to reduce the penalties, then cowardly, mean, and malicious attacks might be made with impunity. He was sorry to differ from the honourable member for Auckland East, but he felt sure that, if the honourable gentleman knew and thought as much on the subject as he did, he would not have done what he (Mr. Joyce) had no doubt the honourable gentleman had done with the very best and kindest possible intentions—namely, proposed to relax this law. He (Mr. Joyce) felt very strongly on the subject, and begged to move, That the Bill be read a third time that day six months.

Mr. O'CONOR recognized in this Bill a dangerous engine in the hands of malicious and bad-minded persons. He did not think the honourable member for Auckland East could be familiar with the power which might be exerted under this Bill by some persons to injure others in a cowardly underhand way. The honourable gentleman seemed to be under the impression that, because they were following the law of England, they were doing what was safe and right in passing this Bill; but he (Mr. O'Conor) considered that the course which Imperial legislation had taken in this direction was wrong. By passing this Bill they would go wrong in not protecting the people. he agreed that the Press should be supported in all that was good, the Press ought to be prevented from committing offences against innocent and inoffensive people. He believed the honourable member for Auckland East would be one of the first to regret the passing of this Newspapers and printing offices were scattered all over the colony, and were in the hands of all sorts of people. Honourable members ought to reflect that, by passing a Bill of this kind, they were practically removing all restraint against that powerful engine when turned against the people of the colony. The clause referring to prosecutions actually made it an impossibility for any one to be prosecuted at all, and the clause which precluded any person from sharing the part-penalty still further strengthened the criminal, by placing obstacles in the way of getting evidence for his conviction. He was determined to oppose the third reading of the Bill, and would call for a

division on the question.

Mr. GRIGG expressed his gratitude to the honourable member for Awarua for objecting to the principle contained in this Bill. One reason, if there were no other, was quite sufficient to induce him to vote against the Bill, and that was that great mischief could be done, and months and months might elapse before the Attorney-General could be moved to take any action. He certainly could not say that the mover of the Bill had taken a very high stand in respect to the liberty of the subject. The principle which the Bill contained was altogether a dangerous one. There appeared to be no allowance whatever to be given to the informer, the principal party in bringing an offence to light, and the whole cost of proceedings would fall on the appellant. He should certainly vote against the Bill, which he took to be a most dangerous one.

Mr. W. D. STEWART said this Bill did not in any way interfere with the law of libel, and a person was still amenable to the criminal law, or to a civil action for damages. The ebject of this Bill was to compel a person, under a penalty, to affix his name to any document, and if he did not do that he was liable to a penalty. By the present Act, if any person printed a book or pamphlet of any kind without affixing his name to it, he was liable to a penalty of not less than £5 and not exceeding £20 for every copy. Reference had been made to the fact that under this Bill the informer would not get his share of the penalty. He was not a believer in informers being rewarded in that

way. They led to mischief, and in many instances laid traps, in order to get a penalty. He thought that, with regard to prosecutions, the steps to be taken were of a most roundabout nature. In a colony like this, where communication was not so easy as it might be, considerable difficulties might arise in the way of prosecutions being undertaken. A very full statement would have to be sent to the Government before consent to prosecute would be given. He thought it would be sufficient if each Commissioner of Police were entitled to give his sanction for the initiation of proceedings under this Act. He should support the Bill, although it might have been amended with advantage.

Mr. PEACOCK would support the Bill. believed it went in the right direction by assimilating the law to that now in force in the Old Country. But he more particularly wished to point out that as the Bill went into Committee it provided that no person "other than" the Attorney-General could prosecute. Committee that had been altered by the substitution of the words "without the consent of," thus making a private individual the prosecutor. Now, the latter part of the clause states that no part of the penalty should go to the informer; and this he thought a proper provision when the Government undertakes the prosecution. But with the alteration to which he referred he submitted that it would be only right, when a private individual prosecuted, and the offence was proved, that the costs incurred by him in the prosecution should be He thought that would be a fair alteration to make in the Bill in another place.

Mr. PYKE said this Bill did not by any means encourage anonymous publications; on the contrary, it simply did this: It provided a penalty for the printing and publishing of an anonymous publication. The object of the Bill appeared to him to be to prevent frivolous actions being brought against the Press. If a document failed to bear upon it the imprint of the printer or publisher, a private individual could not take advantage of that, but the Attorney-General was to commence the prosecution. He understood the argument of the honourable member for Awarus to be that this measure would encourage anonymous publications. The Bill would not encourage the distribution of slanderous or libellous publications. It appeared to be a very excellent Bill, and he would be glad to support it.

Mr. JOYCE explained that he did not say that this Bill would permit of anonymous publications in any way. He said that such an alteration of the law was not required in this colony as yet, for, so far as he knew, nothing more than a trivial prosecution or two had ever been instituted.

Mr. HATCH said the honourable member for Dunedin West had spoken of the penalties imposed at the present time for the neglect to put the imprint to a paper or publication, but he did not state how many convictions there had been under the Act. He (Mr. Hatch) scarcely remembered a single conviction under the Act. If a printer did anything wrong, it

Mr. O'Conor

was almost impossible to find out where the wrong came from—to find out by the particular type used where a particular document had been printed. Of course some weight was to be attached to the statement of the Premier that this was a good Bill and one that ought to be passed into law.

Mr. STOUT did not see any harm that would result from the passing of this Bill. There would still be an opportunity to persons to prosecute, and if a bad case were made out he had no doubt the law would be enforced. Of course, if it happened to be a mere innocent document that was published, a prosecution would not be allowed; but, if the document was in the nature of a libellous publication, then no doubt the permission to prosecute would be granted. If the Local Courts Bill were passed, there would be a means of dealing with such publications by allowing people to sue for libel or defamation in the lower Courts, and that would meet the objection urged by

some honourable members against this Bill. Mr. SHRIMSKI said a person might be injured by the publishing of libellous matter, and, if he had to wait until he obtained the permission of the Attorney-General to prosecute, the whole thing would be circulated throughout the colony and perhaps outside of it. knew of one case, which had come under his own personal knowledge, where a libel was printed and circulated in a paper issued at 3d. a copy without imprint. The attention of the Inspector of Police was called to it, and he went to the office and remonstrated with the printer, and within an hour the whole of the copies were called in.

Mr. DUNCAN said there was one point which had not been touched upon, and that was the difficulty of finding out who published the libellous report, and whom to recommend the Attorney-General to prosecute. He did not think the Bill should be passed in its present shape.

Mr. TOLE said the person who distributed the libelious document would be amenable to prosecution. A case occurred a few days ago in Auckland where a person was prosecuted for not having given his place of residence, although he had given his place of business and the street where it was situated. Of course the case was dismissed, but the person had been put to a good deal of expense. In a case of that kind no Attorney-General would have allowed such a prosecution. It was a perfectly frivolous case. At present any person who circulated printed matter without the printer's name and address was liable to a penalty of not less than £20. That was a monstrous state for the law to be in, and should be amended. The object of this Bill was to make the law similar to the law of England.

Sir G. GREY, in reply, said the subject had been entirely misunderstood by many honourable members. What those members had not understood was this: that every individual who happened to make a present of a prayer-book, or any book of the kind, to which there was no imprint, would be subject, for every book

he gave, to a penalty of not less than £5 or more than £20. He was satisfied that when this measure was understood the whole country would desire to see it adopted. Why should he try to force it upon a Ĥouse that did not understand it or appreciate it? He should take the decision on the matter on the voices. The law had worked admirably in Great Britain, and it would be found to work well in this colony. There were no informers here now, but there might be at no distant time.

Bill read a third time.

GOLD DUTY REDUCTION BILL. Sir G. GREY moved the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. STOUT hoped the honourable gentleman would not proceed further with the Bill. The position was this: that the Government had given a pledge, when a Bill was introduced by the honourable member for Tuapeka, that they would make a proposition on the subject of the gold duty to the House next year. Government were ready to carry out that intention, and would adhere loyally to the understanding which had been arrived at during the discussion on that Bill. If, however, the honourable gentleman persisted with the Bill now before the House, he (Mr. Stout), personally, would have to oppose it, and probably a great many other honourable members would also oppose it; and, if it were negatived, the Government would of course hold themselves absolved from the promise they had given, because they would consider that the House had expressed itself against any reduction of the gold duty, and that they were desired not to bring down propositions on the subject next

Mr. O'CONOR would like the honourable gentleman to state what the understanding

Mr. STOUT said he believed the understanding which the Treasurer had entered into on behalf of the Government was this: that the Government could not see their way to at once reduce the duty on gold, but that before next session they would consider what means could be adopted for supplying the local bodies with revenue in its place, and that, having come to a conclusion on that point, they would re-duce the duty at an early date. That would have to be done by legislation, however, and that legislation could not be introduced until next session.

Mr. BROWN said the understanding was not exactly as the Premier had stated. The Bill he had the honour to introduce proposed that the duty should be abolished on the 31st March next. The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer asked for an extension of time until the 30th September, which he agreed to. The Government had, therefore, undertaken to abolish the duty on the 30th September next.

Mr. STOUT.—No. Mr. BROWN said that if the Treasurer were in his place he would state that that was the pledge which had been given. After that there was further discussion, when the members for Kumara and Inangahua pointed out that it might prejudice the revenues of the local bodies to fix the date, because the banks might take advantage of that by holding the gold for a certain period and so escaping the payment of the duty. The Minister of Mines submitted the matter to him (Mr. Brown) as to whether, instead of fixing a date by Act, it should not be done by Order in Council. That he also accepted. It was always understood that the abolition of the gold duty should take effect some time next session, not later than the 30th September next; and on that understanding he had no doubt, after the statement of the Premier, that the honourable gentleman would withdraw the Bill, as he was perfectly satisfied the Government would not break faith with him, and that the gold export duty would next year be a thing of the past. Mr. GUINNESS thought the Premier had

forgotten one point. It was easy for the Government to say they would do this or that with reference to this celebrated gold duty, but it must be recollected that, though the Government might be able to speak for the House, there was another Chamber which had a voice in the matter, and, as far as he could ascertain, the House passed Gold Duty Abolition or Gold Duty Reduction Bills year after year, and the other Chamber time after time threw them Seeing that any action which the Government proposed to take must, to be effectual, be authorized by both Houses, there must be some assurance that the Bill would be passed through the Upper House as well as through that House. It appeared to him that the Upper House had, by their action in throwing out these Bills, shown that they had not given the matter that consideration which they ought to have given it.

Mr. SEDDON was quite sure that the Premier was sincere; but the reason he thought the Bill should be read a second time and passed through all its stages, and sent to another place, was this: that, when the Council, in 1883, threw out a Bill almost word for word the same as that now before the House, there was a distinct promise that, if the same Bill came up again, it should be passed.

Mr. STOUT.—Who made the promise?

Mr. SEDDON said that was the recommendation of the Gold Fields Committee of the other Chamber; and reference to Hansard would show that members who opposed the Bill on that occasion said the same thing. The objection to the Bill which had been thrown out this session was that it provided for total abolition, and because there was provision for an Order in Council to be issued; but this Bill would pass, he thought, especially with a slight amendment which he proposed to introduce, to the effect that it should not come into operation until after a special order had been passed by a majority of the County Councils in favour of the coming into effect of the Act. That would meet all objections raised in another place, and it would then be seen if they were sincere. The House had already affirmed the principle of the abolition of the gold duty | oppose any alteration in regard to the defence.

this session, and could not now refuse to say that the duty should be reduced by 1s. thisyear and 1s. next year, and that the regulation of it should be left in the hands of the local bodies.

Sir G. GREY, in explanation, after what the Premier had said, did not wish to push the Bill, and asked permission to withdraw it.

Bill withdrawn.

HOUSE.1

ARMED CONSTABULARY BILL.

Mr. GUINNESS, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said that, by way of explaining its objects, he would read clause 26 of "The Armed Constabulary Act, 1867:"-

"It shall not be lawful for any commandant, inspector, sub-inspector, or other officer, or for any constable, during the time he shall continue in the Armed Constabulary, to vote for the election of a member of the General Assembly, or of any Provincial Council, nor shall by word, message, writing, or in any other manner, endeavour to persuade any elector to give, or dissuade any elector from giving, his vote for the choice of any person to be a member to serve in the General Assembly or in any Provincial Council. And if any inspector, subinspector, or other officer, or any constable shall offend therein, he shall forfeit and pay the sum of fifty pounds, to be recovered by any person who will sue for the same by action of debt, to be commenced within six calendar months after the commission of the offence: Provided always that nothing in this enactment contained shall subject any such commandant, inspector, subinspector, or other officer, or any constable to any penalties for any act done by him at or concerning any of the said elections in the discharge of his official duty.

Honourable members would see that, by the provisions of his Bill, the restrictions imposed by this section were not taken away. The restrictions imposed by this section on any constable, officer, or inspector taking an active part in elections were not removed. He simply proposed to withdraw the penalties attached if the right to vote was exercised. He would point out that in 1867, when the Act was passed, the ballot had not been introduced, and therefore it might be reasonably urged that it was proper then to restrict and prevent members. of the police force from exercising the right to vote. The operation of the ballot had, he thought, to a certain extent removed the necessity for the restriction; and, since then, there had been further legislation with regard to the right to vote; and so recently as a few years ago that House, in its wisdom, had said every male twenty-one years old and over living in the colony should have the right to vote. If Civil servants were entitled to vote, he failed to see why the right should be taken from the unfortunate police-constables. If they were to make any distinctions, there were others besides. police-constables who might be exempted.

Mr. BALLANCE quite agreed with what the honourable gentleman had said in regard to the civil branch of the Force, but he would



force, who occupied a position very different from that of the civil force. The defence force were moved about in numbers from district to district; and, being located in a particular district, they might exercise a very preponderating voice in an election, as fifty or one hundred men stationed at some one place might give a block vote. With regard to the civil force, he quite agreed that, as far as voting was concerned, they ought to be placed on the same footing as Civil servants; but they should not be allowed to take an active part in an election in the way of canvassing or otherwise. He hoped the honourable member would accept the suggestion he had made.

Mr. GUINNESS would be most happy to do so.

Mr. ROLLESTON said, for his part, he did not see that the Defence Minister had made out a good case for a distinction between the field force and the civil force. They had several times in the House had resolutions with respect to the necessity for removing the Constabulary Force from different districts, and it was well known that that could not always be done conveniently; and no doubt experience showed that very frequently a familiarity with persons, and what was looked upon—probably in many cases undeservedly—as favouritism, were charged against members of the Constabulary Force. The Legislature ought to do its utmost to keep the Force from the imputation of favouritism, and anybody who had been through an election knew that there was an insensible influence if a person was taking an interest in an election, and it was just as well to avoid that. No doubt a number of the defence force might be brought to influence an election at any time; but the same might apply to the civil force. He hoped the Bill would not go any further.

Dr. NEWMAN hoped the Bill would be allowed to proceed, because throughout New Zealand among the police there was a strong feeling that they were aggrieved by not being allowed to vote, and he failed to see why they should not be allowed to vote. At the same time, he thought it was almost a pity that they had so many little Bills amending the Election Act, and he wished to point out that a comprehensive measure must be brought in by the Government before the next dissolution.

Mr. BRUCE said that during his residence in New Zealand he had been brought into contact with several country constables, and had ascertained from them that they felt they were deprived of the rights of citizens by not being allowed to vote. He had always found them an exceptionally-intelligent class of men. He agreed with the Native Minister when he objected to the military force being allowed to vote; but there was a distinction between constables stationed in the country and the defence force. As regarded the remark of the honourable member for Geraldine with reference to the possibility of men being brought to vote at and influence an election, he did not think that could carry much weight, when they recollected that a man had to be six months in

a district before he could vote. He congratulated the honourable member on introducing this Bill, and, although they knew that a more comprehensive measure must be brought forward, still he acknowledged this Bill as a step in the right direction, and it gave him much pleasure to support the second reading

pleasure to support the second reading.

Mr. BRYCE said the Native Minister had suggested what were really the objections to this Bill; but whether those objections were strong enough to prevent the second reading of the Bill was another matter. The honourable gentleman had suggested that the field force should not be allowed to vote, because they were massed in large numbers, and might be moved about from place to place, controlling the elections to a considerable extent wherever they were. That, no doubt, was an objection, but there was not really that distinction be-tween the field force and the civil police that some members seemed to think existed. In truth, the whole Constabulary Force, including both the civil police and the field force, were under one Act, and all belonged to the Armed Constabulary. The theory of the Force, which came down from Victoria, he understood, was, that an Armed Constabulary Force should be raised, and that, as the civil police required to be augmented, they should be augmented from the reserve force, which reserve force was to be created for that purpose. And honourable members would recollect that, up to eighteen months or two years ago, what was known as the field force was called the reserve force. The real reason of the term was that what was called the field force was to remain a reserve force and to be drawn upon as civil police were required. There was no distinction between the reserve force and the remainder of the Armed Constabulary in the eye of the law. As the Defence Minister had said, it was improper that armed men should take part in an election. The objection was felt in most countries. It was probably founded on very good reasons; and, although he was not prepared to state them all, some of them were obvious enough. The objection which applied to an army voting also applied to the field force in New Zealand. It was only a question of degree. And it also applied to what was known as the civil police, because it would be clear to honourable members that the civil police might be required, at any rate in case of riot, to quell disturbances in connection with an election; and it would not be reasonable or right—he thought it would be anomalous - to give to people whose duty it might be to quell disturbances a right to take part in an election. There was also another reason, which had been suggested by the honourable member for Geraldine—that the civil police officers, when very long in a district, got to know a great many people, and to have a great deal of influence with them of one kind and another. For example, with the publicans—the continuance of whose licenses might in many cases depend upon the police officers—their influence would be very considerable. It was very true, as the honourable member who introduced the Bill had pointed out, that we had the ballot, and that a police officer, if he liked, could exercise his vote without taking any other part openly in the election; but he (Mr. Bryce) thought it might be fairly argued that the officers and men would scarcely be divested of the belief, if they were allowed to exercise their votes, that they could also be allowed to state how they intended to vote, and from that they might become very active canvassers. He thought, upon the whole, that it would be desirable to keep the police from any such temptation; and, though he did not feel very strongly upon the matter, it appeared to him that it would be just as well that the Bill should not pass.

Mr. O'CONOR thought that the objections made against the Bill could be considered as of two kinds. First came the objections raised by the honourable member for Geraldine, which would go against giving a vote to any Civil servants. The honourable member said—what was true—of the police, that they had opportunities of influencing other voters; but would not that apply to the head postmaster or other officers in a district, such as Customhouse officers? The Bill only proposed to give a constable the right to vote, and to give him that right without in the least degree taking away the check provided in the old Act that he should take no part in the elections beyond exercising his vote. That he (Mr. O'Conor) believed to be the regulation which applied to Civil servants everywhere, though it was well known that this regulation did not prevent them taking an active part in elections. If they thought that refusing a policeman a vote would deprive him of the opportunity of exercising his influence in elections if he desired to exercise it, they were much mistaken. He was in favour of giving a constable the right to exercise the franchise, to which he was entitled as a settler in the country; but his duty as a police officer and loyalty to the service to which he belonged should be a bar to his taking an active part in the elections. seemed to be a reasonable provision. He also considered that there was a clear distinction between the field force and the civil force, as the one was an armed force and the men lived in a body; while in the other the men had their homes, and were settled in different districts. He thought the police had a grievance, and he agreed with the Minister of Defence when he said that this voting-power ought to be extended to members of the civil force. The objection urged by the honourable member for Waitotara seemed to point to this: that there was no distinction between the two forces. But he thought, if the honourable gentleman would look at the matter a little more carefully, he would find that there was a very ma-terial distinction. It was sufficient to enable them to give a different rate of pay to the men, and he thought it ought also to be sufficient to classify them for this purpose. thought that using the terms in the Act would make the distinction sufficiently clear, and he hoped the House would pass the Bill, as it was nothing more than an act of justice. Unless

they were prepared to deprive all Civil servants of every class throughout the colony of their right to vote at elections, he thought they should remove the restrictions from the police.

Mr. PYKE thought, if it were possible to distinguish between police officers and Armed Constabulary, something might be said in favour of this Bill; but that was not possible. Even the difference in the amount of the salaries paid to the two branches of the service would not be sufficient to enable them to do that. It was an inconvenient thing, and he had always regarded it as such, and as an unfortunate thing, that in the South Island, because there were some warlike troubles in the North, the whole of the police force should be put on a war footing. He had wished, and was not singular in that wish, that they should distinguish between the semi-soldiers of the North Island and the peace officers of the South. There was no reason whatever why they should have armed constables in the South. There were excellent reasons why they should not be put on that footing. There were also good reasons why those who were intrusted with the preservation of the peace should not be allowed to take part in election contests. It was impossible that a man who had a right to vote should not feel some interest in the matter of exercising his vote, and from feeling an interest he very soon became a partisan. who had watched the progress of events in the United States could see very clearly that the effect of the police being enfranchised had been very bad indeed in connection with political troubles there. He was not inclined to vote for the Bill, and he hoped the House would not pass it. It was absurd to say that if the Bill were not passed the whole Civil Service should be put on the same footing. The actual duty of the police was to preserve the peace, and he thought that could only be done in a proper way by their being entirely free and uninfluenced in connection with elections. It would be a very unwise thing indeed, he thought, to give a body of men intrusted with the preservation of the peace power to vote on one side

or the other in any political fight.

Mr. W. D. STEWART, having regard to the principle that there should be no taxation without representation, apprehended that they could not consistently refuse to extend the franchise not only to what were termed the civil police, but also to the reserve or field force. He saw no reason whatever why any of the inhabitants of this colony should be under any special disadvantage in exercising their right to vote in the election of members of the House. The honourable member who had spoken last seemed to think that, if a constable were deprived of the right to vote, all partisan feeling was at once withdrawn from him; but, as a matter of fact, that feeling might become all the stronger because he was unable to vote. He (Mr. W. D. Stewart) had no hesitation in saying that the police force were at present suffering an injustice, which should be removed as speedily as possible. He had very great respect indeed for the police force,

Mr. Bryce

and felt sure that they would not allow what was termed party political feeling to interfere in the slightest degree with the discharge He ventured to say that, if of their duties. allowed to vote, they would preserve the peace with as much impartiality as if they were not allowed to vote. For his part, he had no complaint to make against them, and he believed they had too much good judgment to take a leading part in politics. But, for instance, schoolmasters and various other public officers had the power of controlling elections if they chose to exercise it. He thought that, with the very sparse population that there would probably be for years to come in the colony, no great amount of political feeling was likely to be concentrated in any particular district. He looked forward, also, to the time when this reserve force would be abolished, and he hoped that that was a not very distant day, and that they would have no such thing as a military force in the colony in the sense in which the words were now used. He heartily supported the measure, and he hoped the honourable member would not modify it so as to exclude any section of the community from the franchise.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE thought the honourable member for Greymouth was rather premature in accepting the amendment proposed by the Minister of Defence. What reason had been shown for depriving the Armed Constabulary of their rights as citizens? The only argument had been that the Government of the day might shift the Armed Constabulary about so as to influence elections. Well, as the law stood, they would have to be in the district six months before they could vote. He ventured to think that, if a Government were so corrupt and bad as to do such a thing, the probability was that the men would not vote in the way the Government wished.

Mr. BRYCE said that his words must not be construed in the way the honourable member had put it. What he said was, that the men might be shifted about from place to place, and so control the elections. He did not mean that the Government would shift them about

for that purpose.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE was not alluding to the remarks of the honourable gentleman, but to those of the Native Minister, and he thought they were both to the same purpose. tions might be controlled in the same way by the Government if they shifted about Civil servants or anybody else. It appeared to him that there was no difference between the Armed Constabulary, ordinary constables, railway employés, and anybody else in the employ of the Government. If it were right to grant the franchise to railway employés, why not grant it to the Armed Constabulary? As to the argument of the honourable member for the Dunstan, who said that it was impossible for a partisan to keep the peace, he would point out that probably five out of every seven members in the House were Justices of the Peace, whose duty also it was to keep the peace; and a great many of those also who

opposed the present members at the elections were Justices of the Peace. But had they ever heard of any breach of the peace at elections? Certainly not. He supposed there was no country in the world where there was greater goodwill and fewer breaches of the peace during general elections than in New Zealand, and he had always failed to see why constables should not be allowed to vote. As a matter of fact, they did vote. He could point out many constables' names on the rolls, many of whom he believed had voted, and would continue to vote. They would be partisans whether the law gave them a vote or not. He had no fear of the influence of the police any more than of that of the Civil Service, and he thought they had always suffered a disability under the law. from which they should be immediately re-

Armed Constabulary Bill.

Mr. SEDDON believed in free trade, and he was sure, so far as the Armed Constabulary were: concerned, there was no good reason why the power to vote should be taken from them. In the district he represented there was a largenumber of Government employés, and he knew that at the last election most of them voted against him. The manager of the Government water-race took an active part in the election, and was invited to a banquet given to the defeated candidate. At the banquet, three cheers were given in honour of the unsuccessful service rendered. He (Mr. Seddon) had no resentment whatever towards him, or to the men working under him: they voted as they considered best for the colony. If he had lost the election, he would feel exactly the same. At the same time, if the police force in his district—who, he contended, were an equally intelligent body of men, had been allowed to vote, he felt satisfied that they would have counteracted the votes of the officers he had alluded to. But he was positive that their political feelings would not have influenced them in the discharge of their duties. And it was a grave reflection to cast on the police force—the Armed Constabulary or the civil force—to say the House was afraid to trust them with voting-power. He recommended the honourable member for Greymouth to persevere with the Bill, notwithstanding that he had hastily consented to leave out that portion of the Bill which referred to the Con-When he had heard the Native Minister making his assertions regarding the removal of the Armed Constabulary from place to place, he felt inclined to agree with him; but, after reflection, and hearing the arguments on the other side, he thought the honourable member for Greymouth had come to a hasty conclusion; and he hoped the House would carry the Bill through as printed.

Mr. STOUT said there was one point of view

that had not been noticed: that was that, if they had a field force, five or six hundred men might be placed even for six months in one electoral district, and they would swamp entirely all the real settlers. If they were split up in small bands of men not exceeding fifty in one district, he should not see any objection to giving them the franchise. However,

the Bill could be easily amended, so far as the Middle Island was concerned; and they could also pick out all the towns in the North Island. Perhaps that would be the best way to pass the Bill. There were only about one thousand altogether now of both the civil force and the field force. The latter numbered between four and five hundred. The railway employés numbered four thousand, and he did not see why the police should not have the same right to vote. He found that this question He read was also being agitated in England. an account the other day of a picnic held by all the policemen in one district in Eng-land; and one grievance discussed there was that they had not the franchise, and they expressed a hope that the franchise would be Although several disapgranted to them. proved of it, the general feeling was that they should have the franchise. If the honourable member got his Bill read a second time, no doubt he would be satisfied with having the principle affirmed this session.

Mr. GUINNESS was glad to see that the measure had met with general approval, and he felt certain that, before this Parliament expired at any rate, they would give those citizens the right they had been asking for.

Bill read a second time.

The House adjourned at one o'clock a.m.

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, 24th October, 1884.

First Readings—Second Readings—Third Readings—Cock-fighting near Greymouth—Local Bills introduced by Government—South Island Native Reserves—Workmen's Wages Bill—West Harbour Borough Empowering Bill—Waikato Confiscated Lands Bill—East and West Coast (Middle Island) and Nelson Railway Bill—Trustees and Executors' Companies Shareholders Liability Bill.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

#### FIRST READINGS.

School Committees Election Bill, False Notice of Birth, Marriage, and Death Bill, Printers and Newspapers Registration Bill, Hokitika Steam-Tug Bill.

## SECOND READINGS.

Fisheries Conservation Bill, Supreme Court Registrar (Taranaki) Empowering Bill.

# THIRD READINGS.

Gisborne Harbour Bill, Employment of Females Bill, City of Dunedin Leasing Powers Bill, Codlin Moth Bill.

# COCK-FIGHTING NEAR GREYMOUTH.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY said he had promised the Hon. Mr. Wilson the other day to institute inquiries with regard to the alleged cock-fighting on the west coast of the Middle Island, and had now to inform him that he

Mr. Stout

had received the following report from Colonel Reader:—

"A report has been received from the Inspector at Greymouth to say he has laid informations against twelve persons for recent cock-fighting at Marsden. The hearing will be on the 4th November, and he expects to obtain convictions against them all."

# LOCAL BILLS INTRODUCED BY GOVERNMENT.

The Hon. Captain BAILLIE moved, That the following resolution, reported from the Standing Orders Committee, be agreed to, namely: "That local Bills introduced as measures of Government policy be exempted from the necessity of previous notification, and that such Bills be referred to a Select Committee after the second reading."

The Hon. Mr. HART said this motion, if carried, would put it in the power of the Government, if it pleased, to bring in all local Bills, and to affect seriously the position of localities and the interests of individuals, without subjecting them to the previous investigation which the Council had always exacted in such cases. He thought it might act very unjustly to localities, and therefore hoped the Council would not agree to the motion.

Council would not agree to the motion.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY thought the passing of this motion would put the Government in a very awkward position. On a former occasion, when Bills of a much more local character than those out of which this motion arose were before the Council, it was said that the responsibility of the Government was quite sufficient to allow the Bills to be exempted from the necessity of being referred to the Local Bills Committee. There was the same responsibility in regard to these Bills, and he thought the mere fact of local Bills being made Government Bills ought to satisfy the Council on all occasions. He would therefore move, as an amendment, That all the words of the motion after the word "notification" be struck out.

The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE thought the words "introduced as measures of Government policy" met the objection of the Hon. Mr. Hart. It was often the case that the Government were compelled to introduce measures overruling private rights for the general good of the country, and under such circumstances he did not think they ought to be compelled to observe all the preliminaries which were necessary in the case of ordinary local Bills. No injury could be done by the course proposed, for he was quite sure that the Legislature would not allow the Government to overrule private rights without providing adequate compensation. As to the amendment of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, he (Sir G. S. Whitmore) conceived that the words he proposed to omit were added as good deal as a consequence of a precedent in another place. A Committee of the Council had reported that two Harbour Bills now before the Council were local Bills; but in another place those Bills had first been exempted from the necessity of being treated as

local Bills, and then referred to a Select Committee. To pass this Standing Order would always put it in the power of the Government to nominate its own Committee, and to have in it the influence which the Government should properly possess. He therefore did not think the Hon. the Colonial Secretary need object to it. Of course, if the motion were not carried, it would be always in the power of any honourable gentleman to move for the appointment of a Select Committee to consider any measure, and if such a Committee were appointed the Government would not necessarily have so much influence on it as it might have on a Committee of its own nomination; and, even if the Committee were appointed by ballot, it would be exceedingly improbable that the Government would have as much influence on the Committee as it might have if the nomination were conferred on the Government by a Standing Order. motion took nothing from the Council, which, of course, could always constitute a Committee as it pleased; but, as the motion was in favour of the Government-and therefore of succeeding Governments—he, in the Hon. the Colonial Secretary's place, would accept it.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN said the Local Bills Committee had reported that these two Harbour Bills were local Bills, and that the Standing Orders had not been complied with. Therefore, if this motion were not carried, would not the Standing Orders have to be suspended, to allow those Bills to proceed?

The Hon. the SPÊAKER said that was so. The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE said the amendment of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary would not effect the object he desired. honourable gentleman said the necessity of referring local Bills introduced by the Government to the Local Bills Committee should be dispensed with. But, if the motion as proposed to be amended were carried, the necessity would still remain, though the necessity for previous notification would be dispensed with. If his honourable friend preferred the ordeal of the Local Bills Committee to the ordeal of the Select Committee, he (Mr. Waterhouse) would have no difficulty in voting with him; but he wished to point out that the amendment would defeat the object the honourable gentleman had in view.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN said there was no doubt that the new Standing Order imposed restraints on the Government where they had been formerly unrestrained to a considerable extent. The necessity for it had arisen from the abuse - he was obliged to use plain language—of a power given the Government. did not say that this Government had been guilty of any deviation from propriety in this matter, but he knew that a former Government was very subject to irregularities of the kind in introducing local Bills, unconsciously per-haps, through yielding to the wishes of their friends. And he had himself felt that the privilege of the Government in that Council the difficulties in this matter—if, instead of it being made obligatory to refer all these Bills to a Select Committee, it were made permissive to do so, allowing any honourable member to move, if it appeared to him desirable, that a Government Bill of the character of a local Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. That would be effected by simply saying, "that such Bills may be referred to the Select Committee after the second reading." threw out that suggestion to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary as a middle way out of the

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL could not see what objection the Hon. the Colonial Secretary could have to this proposal. It appeared to have been framed with the simple desire of facilitating the progress of Government measures of this description through the Council. As to the proposal to insist upon the reference of such Bills to a Select Committee after the second reading, he might remind honourable members that, until within the last few years -since habits of indolence or negligence had crept up among them-nearly every Bill had been referred to a Select Committee, and many Bills to two Committees successively; and he thought that their legislation had not been generally improved by a departure from the previous practice. He thought the operation of this proposal would facilitate the passage of these Bills to a very great extent. The Government would naturally nominate the Select Committee, and the Council would-except in extreme cases, which he would not suppose likely-accept the nominations of the Government. It would greatly facilitate the consideration of Bills by the Committee of the Whole, because a greater number of honourable members would have an intimate knowledge of their provisions than would otherwise be the case. As to the suggestion of the Hon. Dr. Pollen, it was now in the power of the Council to refer any Bill it chose to a Select Committee. He hoped the Hon. the Colonial Secretary would see his way to accept this proposed Standing Order, which he was sure was framed with the very best intention to facilitate the passing of public business.

The Hon. Mr. OLIVER thought the better way to meet the difficulty would be by saying that local Bills introduced by the Government should not be referred to the Local Bills Committee, leaving the Council to send them to a Select Committee if it chose. He rose, however, to reply to a remark made by the Hon. Dr. Pollen, who had brought a charge against the late Government in reference to its treatment of local Bills. The Government could only have taken charge of local Bills which were part of its policy, and in the public interest. He did not call to mind a single instance during the time he occupied the bench opposite in which it had been otherwise, and he should like to hear an instance from his honourable friend Dr. Pollen of the cases to which he

had alluded.

was being, on many occasions, abused. It might be that a middle course would meet all his general recollection, and had qualified it in

reference to his honourable friend opposite by saying the Government had fallen into the error unconsciously sometimes.

The Hon. Mr. OLIVER said it was so unconsciously that no one had ever become con-

scious of it, to his knowledge.

The Council divided on the question, "That the words proposed to be omitted be retained."

#### AYES, 14.

Brandon McLean Waterhouse
Grace Peter Whitmore
Hart Pollen Wigley
Johnson, G. R. Richmond, J.C. Wilson.
Mantell Scotland

#### Noes, 17.

Oliver Acland Dignan Baillie Fraser Peacock Barnicoat Kohere Pharazyn Lahmann Reeves Brett Buckley, P. A. Miller Reynolds. Campbell Ngatata

Majority against, 3.

Words struck out.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY moved, That the following words be added to the motion as amended: "and of reference to Local Bills Committees."

Amendment agreed to.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

SOUTH ISLAND NATIVE RESERVES. The Hon. Mr. MANTELL moved, That there be laid upon the table a list of all Crown grants issued under the 3rd clause of "The South Island Native Reserves Act, 1883." It was only necessary, in moving this resolution, to say that a certain Bill was passed last year, under which the Natives had handed over their reserves to the Governor with a view of getting Crown grants; and they had also consented to certain concessions in order to get the grants. He now desired, with a view to future legislation, to know distinctly what grants had been issued under this Act.

Motion agreed to.

# WORKMEN'S WAGES BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 13.—No payment in advance to be made for work under construction.

The Hon. Mr. OLIVER moved, That the clause be struck out.

The Council divided on the question, "That the clause proposed to be struck out remain a clause of the Bill."

# AYES, 21.

Acland Fraser Pharazyn Barnicoat Hart Reeves Brett Johnston, J. Reynolds Buckley, P. A. Miller Richmond, J. C. Campbell Ngatata Waterhouse Chamberlin Nurse Whitmore Dignan Peacock Wilson.

NoEs, 12.

Brandon Henderson Kohere Grace Johnson, G. R. Mantell

Hon. Dr. Pollen

McLean Peter Scotland
Oliver Pollen Wigley.

Majority for 9

Majority for, 9.

Clause retained.
Bill reported, with amendments.

# WEST HARBOUR BOROUGH EMPOWER-ING BILL.

The Hon. Captain FRASER, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said it was to enable the borough to borrow £1,050 17s. 6d. to pay a debt owing to the Waikouaiti County Council, which sum included £230 8s. which had accrued by way of interest. Doubts had arisen as to whether the Borough Council could raise a loan in discharge of this debt, and such doubts could not be set at rest, owing to the account-books having been wilfully burned by the late Town Clerk, for which he had been sent to gaol; and the Borough Council now came to Parliament to ask for power to borrow the money.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE said, in regard to our capacity for borrowing, he was very much reminded of the elephant's trunk, which could pick up a needle or grasp a canon. It appeared that no sum was too large or too small to borrow: they borrowed with alacrity £3,000,000 or £1,050 17s. 6d., down to the sixpence. Surely a Corporation could levy a rate to pay off that sum without coming for a loan-empowering Bill. However, he did not intend to oppose the second reading of the measure.

Bill read a second time.

WAIKATO CONFISCATED LANDS BILL. The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said its object was to extend the time within which certain Natives who were once in rebellion against the Crown might return to the settlements made for them under an Act passed in 1880. An Act was passed in 1882 extending for two years the time during which they could take advantage of the Act of 1880. But objections and difficulties had, it appeared, arisen on the part of the Natives to return to this district, and this Bill was simply to further extend the time within which the Natives might, as it was

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE asked if there was any expectation of the Natives availing themselves of the Bill. It would be some satisfaction to know the measure was likely to be operative.

hoped they would, take up their abode in the

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY said there was a hope that the Natives would avail themselves of the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

settlement set apart for them.

EAST AND WEST COAST (MIDDLE ISLAND) AND NELSON RAILWAY BILL.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—If I had some hesitation in making up my mind as to the

course I should pursue in regard to a Bill before us a few days ago-the District Railways Bill—I shall have no hesitation in making up my mind as to the course I shall pursue on this, cccasion. Sir, I did all I could to prevent the Railways Construction and Land Act from becoming law, and I look upon this as about an equally mischievous measure, which should not find its way on to the Statute Book. I can easily understand that this Bill was conceived in the manner that the District Railways Act was conceived, with the best intention of satisfying the craving for railways in the different districts which is now claiming to be gratifled; and I remember that, when by the District Railways Act it was endeavoured to propound a system for that purpose, it was thought likely to largely benefit the colony and fulfil the purpose for which it was intended. I do not at all seek to evade the responsibility I had in the preparation of that measure. At that time the colony had over-borrowed, its credit had been going down, and it was impossible for us to go into the London money-market for money, and it was an absolute necessity that we should find some way of getting the rail-ways so urgently asked for by other means than by the colony borrowing to make them. And how sadly disappointed are the promoters of that measure to day, when we can see its effects and the difficulties which have been caused by it! How different are the proposals that have been made to us now by the Bills that have been put before the Council! the effects of the District Railways Act have been so bad that it is proposed to end its opera-tion, and to buy up the lines made under it, I think it would be folly on our part to try a repetition of that bad policy, as it is now proposed we should do. I do not hesitate to say that the same difficulties will arise under the Railways Construction Act; and, taking only one instance under it, the railway from Wellington to Palmerston, the time will come when it will be a question of the colony buying that railway. That will occur after large commissions have been paid for floating the railway, and after 5 or 6 per cent. of interest has been paid on the money spent on it, while the colony could have raised it at 4 per cent. All that the colony will have to pay for; and it will have to buy that railway, because it is a portion of a main arterial line. So it must be with any railways joining on the Government railways. They must become sources of difficulty. Now, as to the question before us, I will consider, first, what has led to the asking for this railway, will it pay, and can the colony afford at the present moment to construct it? Now, we know that there has been a great deal of agitation to get this railway, and that much of it has been founded not on the consideration as to whether the railway will pay so much as on the fact that it would mean spending money in the district. That is nearly always Whenever a loan is to be raised, the the case. question in the different districts is not as to the value of the works proposed to be constructed, but how much shall be spent in the | ing money for the work, when I knew that the

district, whether rightly or wrongly. It will become a question for the colony to examine how much of these non-paying railways it will have to tax the people of the country for. Now, we know that the question of this rail-way has been examined by different people. The Chamber of Commerce of Christchurch appointed men whom they thoroughly believed in to examine it, and when they came back with their report they stated that this was not a line that would pay any private people to construct, and that the Government ought to do it. That was a very good reason, as honourable members will imagine. Well, then, we know that Ministers themselves, and Parliament, had stated before that this is not a line which the colony should construct, but a line which should be given to some syndicate to construct. I am not one of those who believe that the colony is not in a position to construct those lines that it is necessary to construct at the present moment, and that we have no choice but to hand the making of necessary railways over to syndicates. Let us see what is a syndicate. A syndicate is a number of men who club together in order to enrich them-selves at the expense of the many. That is the proper interpretation to put on the term "syndicate." I have heard honourable members in this Council and in the other House say that the land is so poor that there is no fear that the line will be taken up by any syndicate in the manner proposed by this Bill; but I do not agree with that. There is a possibility of misguiding people, and getting them to subscribe for schemes they know nothing about, merely depending on the names of those who propose them. A syndicate would issue a prospectus in London, and you may rest assured that they will not put in it extracts from the speeches of those honourable members who say the land is no good, that it is mountaintops, and not worth anything. They will take the speeches of the honourable members of this Council and of the House who say that it is going to be a very paying concern—some of our Canterbury friends, for instance — and they will make out that it is a land flowing with milk and honey; not the tops of useless

mountains, but——
The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—A doad level.
The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—Yes; a dead level, capable of carrying millions of sheep. A prospectus will be issued in that way, and the unwary taken in: that is the procedure resorted to by a syndicate. Before I proceed further, let me say this: I was in London when the prospectus for the Wellington-Manawatu Railway Company was issued, and I was persecuted by different classes of people to give my opinion as to the paying capabilities of that railway, and it was very difficult to answer them, seeing that I was not altogether well up as to what the prospects of it were, though I have since been able to examine them more. I felt I was in a difficulty, because I was not able to give a candid opinion. I did not want to offer any opposition to the people subscrib-

Government must take it over at some time or [ other; and I gave my opinion that, as it was a portion of a main arterial line, ultimately the Government must take it, and that, whether they secured interest in the meantime or not, by-and-by it would be taken from them by the Government, and that it depended on how the concessions turned out whether they would make a profit or not. I gave my answer as well as I could without throwing any difficulty in the way of their subscribing the money to make the line; for I believe that ultimately they will get their money back, and interest with it. The people who subscribe to these things are not people who are able to look after themselves; they are generally guided by the names on the prospectus, and are mostly people with small incomes, such as clergymen, and people who subscribe because they think they are going to get 8 per cent. or some high rate of interest, and who therefore look upon New Zealand as a very fine case indeed. Now, seeing that the colony is in such a position that, if it is necessary to make the railway, we could borrow the money and make it ourselves, where is the necessity, to say nothing of the morality, of this Legislature allowing it to be made in the manner proposed, when we know that even those who are most interested in getting this railway made believe that it will not pay, and that it is a few years before its time? I am not one of those who believe that this railway will not be made. I believe a time will come when it will be made; but that time is not yet. But circumstances may lead to it much quicker than we now think. Great mineral discoveries may be made, and possibly a time may come round when we may be advocating this railway much sooner than we imagine now. Now as to the question as to how this railway will pay. The Hon. Mr. Reeves has compared it with the cutting of the tunnel at Lyttelton, and has said that the results are likely to be similar. That has been well answered by another honourable member, who pointed out that that tunnel was made to open on to the whole of Canterbury, a vast area of rich plains. There is no comparison whatever between that and this case. Then, my honourable friend Mr. Reeves compared this railway with that from Christchurch to Dunedin. Well, Sir, where is the comparison? That line runs through a country the whole of which is largely inhabited, and there are a number of towns on the way-a line which might be naturally expected to pay as soon as it was made. There is nothing of that in this case. The Hon. Mr. Reeves must have had great difficulty in finding arguments, when he used such an illustration as that. This line will run for many miles through hills where even those who are most eager for the railway say people cannot settle, and therefore all the traffic there can be will be between the two ends. As to that traffic, a number of people have said a good deal as to a large coal raffic by this railway, and others have said that it will not be able to compete in cost with sea-carriage. Well, I myself—and I have had

some experience-do not believe in the statement that you are going to get coal by sea from the West Coast to Lyttelton for 3s. a ton. I do not believe that will pay, because the labour on it will be considerable. No doubt there will be a large decrease on the present cost, which is 11s. a ton, because the bars are now in such a state that only small cargoes can be got out; but by-and-by we may expect to be able to get out larger cargoes, and then it may be brought to Lyttelton for 7s. 6d. a ton. That is a lower rate than coal could be carried by the railway for, because it would have to be dragged up nearly 3,000ft., and for seventeen miles there is a gradient of 1 in 50. Of course haulage up 1 in 50 for a short distance would not much matter, but such a steep gradient and sharp curves for seventeen miles would be a great strain on the engines. Only small loads could be drawn, and the cost of haulage would be very considerable. Then, as to the traffic from Canterbury to the West Coast. Produce cargo is the back loading of the colliers now, and it is not a question of how much they can charge, but how much they can get. They must take what they can get, and they can-not fix their own rate of freight. Therefore, with low rates of sea freight, and especially if you make these proposed harbours, there will be very little traffic for your railway. Then, I come to this point: It is agreed on all hands that this railway will not pay its working ex-penses—at all events not more. Well, now, let us see how many of these lines the colony can afford to make which will not return more than working expenses, and how much it will affect the taxpayers of the colony. This railway, assuredly every one will confess, will not do more than pay working expenses. With regard also to the northern trunk line, which is at present about to be constructed, the same opinion has been expressed; and I do not think it will be disputed by any one that that line will not do more than pay working ex-penses for a considerable time to come. But that line goes through Native country, and every one concedes that it is right to make it. I am not saying anything at all against the making of that line in my present remarks. Well, there will be the interest on that, too, to be paid by the taxpayer. There will be interest, also, for the Otago Central line, which—although no doubt considerable work has been done on it, and it ought to be continued—there is no denying the fact, will not pay anything over working expenses for some time. We may take it, then, that there are three other large outlays going on for undertakings that will not pay anything over working expenses. There are also a number of branch lines that must be taken into accountthose constructed under the District Railways Act, which, I suppose, will have to be taken over. It is shown that they cannot pay much over working expenses, and of course what does not pay all comes back to the taxpayers of the colony. Then, how much increase of taxation can the people of this colony bear-not only

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those benefiting by the construction of the railways, but the rest of the colony, getting no benefit from the construction? Therefore it is unwise to proceed with the execution of this work before the others are gone on with which require a certain amount of completion in order that they may give some return. I, for one, would not hesitate to go on with the rail-way, although it was not likely to pay immediately; but there must be some limit to the extent to which we can go with these railways. Pressure has been brought to bear in connection with this matter, and it is made a standing menace to the Government that they must bring in this Bill and make this railway or they will lose the support of a number of members. Well, it is for this Council to make a stand against all this log-rolling, because, when this log-rolling is commenced, it is easy to see that, when members gather together, they will keep it rolling along till it will gather so much moss that it will involve the Government. It is to prevent this log-rolling that this House is here. We can have no feelings affected by local influence, except members who come from the district, and the rest of us must take the odium on ourselves of saving them from themselves. It is only natural that they should be influenced; we do not expect people coming from where a thing is very popular to resist the pressure of its popularity; we can only expect that they should stand up as advocates for it. I am sorry my honourable friend Mr. Reeves, when he made his first speech in this Council, had not a better cause, because I must give him credit for making a very fair case out of a very bad one. It has been said that this Bill is a harmless Bill. I am not going to review its contents before we say it shall go to a second reading; but I agree with those who have reviewed the contents of the Bill that very few members of this Council will approve of its 5th clause. If it is true that the Bill is simply harmless, then I object to "humbug" being put on the Statute Book; but if honourable members put this on the Statute Book they will find it will be more than humbug, because we all know the pressure that can be put on any Govern-ment in connection with such a Bill. We know that, if people get up a feasible-looking syndicate, pressure will be brought to bear on the Government to make them yield, and terms not in accordance with the Act will be granted, and an agreement entered into with the reservation that that agreement shall be sanctioned by Parliament. Let us look back to the time of the Brogden contracts. An agreement was then made, and pressure was brought upon the Legislature to ratify that agreement; and, although there was no legislative authority for it to the extent it was gone into, it was found necessary to give the Brogden people a million of money in contracts, to the exclusion of all local contractors, in order to settle the difficulty. The same thing would very likely happen in this case. I heard it stated, I believe by the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, that this railway would be made by a foreign company, and that

the pressure would not be the same from such a company as from a local company. Well, I was one of the Committee who investigated the Brogden claims, and I can assure honourable members that the pressure on that Committee was very great, and that the door was only closed by a majority, I think, of one. When people enter into these contracts there is also the Supreme Court to be resorted to; and what chance has the Government of the colony in the Supreme Court against contractors? One Government goes out, another comes in; that goes out, and so on; the engineers are scattered—they are away or dead—and when the action comes on in the Supreme Court the colony is not in an equal position, but is very heavily handicapped as against the contractor, and will probably be mulcted in heavy damages as the result. Those who remember the pressure from the Brogden people will agree that pressure from abroad may be pretty hard to withstand. Depend upon it, if this contract is gone into the people of this colony will be held responsible. I believe that every contract should be founded on the principle that there should be an advantage on both sides, and that the party entering into the contract has a right to make something out of it. If a merchant sells goods, he endeavours to sell them in the best market; but the distributor who buys from the merchant will have to make a profit, or he cannot live. So the transactions of the colony should be entered into upon fair principles, and contractors must have a fair return for the risk they have to run. The district railways have been referred to; but when the question of the district railways was brought up the colony was in a very different position from what it is now in: one loan of a very large amount had been sacrificed, there was another loan going at a sacrifice, and in fact a stoppage was put to our borrowing. But, now that money is lent in England at so low a rate, the circumstances are different. If there is a necessity for the construction of this line of railway, why should the colony not take it up itself and make it, if the pressure for it is so great? I would twenty times sooner vote the money for the work than vote to get into the position that this Bill would really put us in. After you have given all this land—after you have given 50 per cent. of the land at £15,000 per mile to make the railway—depend upon it the undertaking will come back to the colony, and the colony will have to take it over after all. People will have to pay a large commission for floating this company, and they will have to pay a large percentage on the debentures; and, as against that, the colony can borrow money at 4 per cent.: so that, if there is a determination that the railway ought to be gone on with, it should be gone on with by the colony, and not by any syndicate whatever. It is a pity, I think, that we have not some better system of investigating the railways we are about to make than the haphazard way we have hitherto adopted of enter-ing into them. What is the course in England, where it is not the Government but private

companies that make the lines, and have to apply to Parliament for a Bill before entering upon the execution of the work? They have to face a Committee properly provided with plans and everything settled to a nicety—every station shown, and every curve of the line. All the minutest particulars they must have prepared, and then face a Committee to show the bona fides of their undertaking. What has been the case in this colony? We have entered upon the construction of lines of railway without consideration. We are entering upon the construction of a line of railway in the North Island at the present moment without sufficient data - data that should be produced before the line of route is decided upon. Of course I admit that, where there is no dispute about the line, it should be immediately proceeded with; but where there is difficulty such as we have in connection with many railways—great consideration should be given to the matter. I have only to refer to the main line of railway near Dunedin to show that. The railway there went through thick bush, near a small place I have; and, at the time, they were filling in thousands and thousands of tons of earth in a gully, while a hundred yards further up they could have got a straight line which required no filling. And what is the cause of this great hurry for going on with the work? We are told that it is to be hurried on to find work for the unemployed. I think plenty of work could be found for the unemployed by pushing on those lines which are partly constructed or ready for contract. If you go on quickly with them you will find plenty of work for the unemployed, for there are plenty of lines, on which a great deal of money has been spent, that will pay nothing until they are pushed on to completion. As far as that argument goes, of finding employment by the construction of this line for men out of work, there is nothing in it. I hope, too, that, long before you get this line under way by handing it over to a syndicate, New Zealand will be in such a position that the working-men will have plenty of employment. If they have to wait for the beginning of this line, certainly while the grass is growing the steed will be starving; because it will be a considerable time before they get under way under any circumstances. Something has been said about pressure; but I do not care for any pressure, from whatever source it may come. We are here to do our duty without any consideration of pressure. I voted for the last Bill because I thought it would take the country out of a difficulty-and I believe what was proposed will have to be done yet—and I am not going to vote for this Bill, because I believe it would put the country in a worse position than the one we were asked to get it out of. We have a right to independence of action, and I believe we should take every Bill on its merits, without any consideration of party, without any consideration of what the result may be or what the risk may be of voting for it, and either reject it or accept it on its merits. The other day, because I led an onslaught on a Bill, one

East and West Coast and

honourable gentleman said, "I will have it out of you when your Bill comes on." not pay any attention to that; and what did I find? When my Bill came on that honourable gentleman was one of its greatest advocates, for all his banter. A man may feel alittle sore, and say a thing he does not mean; and, though I do not think it is wise to bring such banter into the Council, I believe every member will exercise his vote independently. When I first entered into politics, and when I had done all I could to defeat what I thought to be a bad measure, and had failed, I used to go home and fret over it and could hardly sleep: but I have got to that condition now that I stand up and declare against a Bill, if I think it should not pass; I show all the bad points in it, I bring the objections to it before the Council as well as my small abilities will allow me, and, having done that, I consider I have done my duty. I record my vote, and, if the Bill is carried in the face of that, the country will not sink notwithstanding. However, Sir, I ask honourable members to think well before they put this Bill on the Statute Book. However harmless it may be supposing nothing should come out of it, it is mischievous to put a. Bill on the Statute Book of no meaning and not likely to be carried out. No doubt we cannot expect the Canterbury members to vote against this Bill, and therefore the rest of us must take upon ourselves the odium of resisting this measure. It is confessed on all sides that this line will not pay. The principal members of the Government have said that the line will not pay—that it can only be made by a syndicate; and I therefore call upon this. Council to reject the measure, and to wait for the time when it will be a fair proposal to bring before the House as an undertaking for the colony.

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN.—Sir, living in the place which is particularly interested in this contemplated railway-a railway which, I may say, is of almost paramount importance -I hold it to be my duty to say a few words, and I trust that the Council will bear with me while I make the few remarks that I have tooffer regarding this Bill. I do not think it can be denied that this colony stands to a certain extent pledged to this very work. We need only go back as far as 1869-70, when the public works and immigration policy was initiated, to find that this railway to connect the east and west coasts of the Middle Island formed part of the so-called trunk line of this colony. And we find now, that, on a considera-tion of our financial position, and how little-we can afford to construct this railway with colonial funds - I say we find now that the present Government, after many attempts on the part of former Governments, propose a measure which will give us what benefit we expect from this line without involving the colony in any responsibility or expense. I know very well that the opinion of a great number of members is an opposite one: they think that, by carrying out the work proposed in the Bill now before us, the colony will, to a

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certain extent, put itself in the position in which it finds itself in regard to the district railways. But I wish to remind honourable members that the circumstances are very different. While, on the one hand, we have to deal with the complaints of a great number of taxpayers of this colony, and of the unfor-tunate speculators who undertook to build the district railways, this Bill contemplates leaving the making of this railway to a foreign company -- a so-called syndicate. Of course it will be for us to guard ourselves against any claim which may originate out of a con-tract entered into by the Government with this syndicate. In my opinion nothing can be easier. The Bill requires some alteration, and perhaps even certain clauses might be advantageously struck out in Committee, in order to effect this. The chief objection to this Bill has been raised by the Hon. Mr. Miller. He lays great stress upon the report of the Royal Commission, and he has favoured us with several extracts from that report. But I am sure of one thing, and that is that, if the honourable gentleman had observed, like myself, how this so-called Royal Commission obtained the information which it got, and the way in which its work was conducted - the carelessness which was observed and the hurry with which it was carried out - he would not attach so much importance to the report. I say nothing against the gentlemen who composed the Commission, and for whom personally I have a very great regard; but the hurry with which they endeavoured to conclude their labours rendered it impossible that they could judge adequately of the resources of the country, and whether or not this railway was likely to be remunerative. I say these gentlemen did not use the proper means to obtain information of this character, and therefore I am inclined to think that, if the honourable gentleman had seen as much of that as I have seen by personal observation, he would not place so much faith in their report as he does.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—How about the

evidence?

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN.—As to the evidence, that is just the thing that I complain of. It was taken in such an objectionable way that I can scarcely describe it. It is true that the gentlemen who composed the Commission provided themselves with suitable clothing, and I dare say they also managed to kill a few horses, and had to undergo great hardships in travelling through the country. "How about the evidence!" I ask, what does the evidence really amount to? There is an old saying that doctors differ; but, if there is one profession in which its members differ, it is the engineering profession: therefore we must not be surprised at the difference of opinion expressed by engineering authorities. I have read all these reports, being greatly interested, and I found that there were not two opinions alike, one party contradicting the other as to the most suitable route, and as to the probable cost of the line. The honourable gentleman went into a comparison of how the receipts to be derived

from this railway in carrying coals would be nullified by the accommodation afforded by making suitable harbours on the West Coast. I am glad to be able to contradict him in that respect. He leaves out of sight the fact that, although the railways cannot compete with steam colliers in carrying coals to certain harbours, they have an advantage in being able to deliver coals in the interior—in towns, for instance. By way of example, I may point out that, if the steamers carry coal round to Lyttelton, considerable expense has to be incurred in forwarding the coal from there up to Christchurch and further on, where steamers cannot get.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER. — If the honourable gentleman will excuse me, I referred to that particularly, and I suggested that in that respect it will only have the effect of competing.

with local industries.

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN.—I do not know what we have to do with local industries already established; but it must not be forgotten that the transport of coals to these interior places is calculated to promote these local industries, for there are very few industries in which coal does not form a very important article. The honourable gentleman also expressed his fear that this company might take possession of very valuable gold fields. From that I can only infer that my honourable friend has not taken much pains to make himself acquainted with the clauses of the Bill. He will find that the gold fields, after being taken possession of by this syndicate, will still be open to the miner, without any compensation for the value of the gold fields; and he will find also that, according to the Act passed a few years ago, all existing gold fields are excluded from the land given to a syndicate for making railways. Therefore his remarks on this head are without foundation. I am only sorry that the honourable gentleman had not the pleasure of hearing the speech of the Hon. Mr. Reeves, who in every respect not only refuted all the arguments advanced by the honourable gentleman, but also met the remarks, in regard to sentimental matters, of the Hon. Mr. Miller, who regretted that he had to go against the wishes of his friends in Canterbury. The honourable gentleman was completely answered by the Hon. Mr. Reeves, in a very able speech. Next we come to the Hon. Sir George Whitmore. His opinion, I will confess without any hesitation, on this Bill coincides with mine in every respect. He states that it is for the persons who offer to build this railway and take a certain reward in land to look out whether their bargain is a good one or not; and I do trust that honourable gentlemen will look at the What have we matter in a businesslike way. to do? Are we going to blind this so-called syndicate by a statement of that with which we are not even ourselves acquainted—that is to say, as to the real state of the country and the value of the land? It is all very well to go by reports. For myself I may say that I have been a dozen times or more on this route, and I do not find myself able to say how much good land is to be found there in order to compensate the promoters of this railway; but I know, on the other hand, that there are three million acres of land in the Province of Westland, of course a large portion of it a great distance from the railway. The land contemplated to be given under this Bill will, in the ordinary course of events, remain as it is for many years to come. It will be the business of this com-pany to settle the land. It is more than pos-sible that rich deposits of minerals may be discovered. As I have already stated, goldmining is altogether out of the question, and, in regard to other minerals, I should be only too glad to find that the syndicate will get a reward by finding rich deposits. As far as I know, the very surveyors and engineers who went out on the ranges to find the best route for this railway have discovered a great many places where ironstone was to be found in large quantities. Now, it cannot be denied that, where ironstone is found, and where coals are so convenient as they are all over the West Coast, a great trade will spring up in consequence. If such a trade springs up, and if the manufacture of iron should come to anything, it will give work to a great number of people, and will effect the settlement of large tracts of land, and will therefore tend to the benefit of the colony at large. The Hon. Mr. Oliver, who spoke on this question, expressed his regret that better means could not be adopted to make this railway, which has been promised for a long time by various Governments. The honourable gentleman knows very well that the financial position of the colony will not allow us to go and borrow money for this purpose. He is very well aware of that. When Minister for Public Works he put off the just claims of many districts by the simple method of promising them to "keep it steadily in view," and he must know by this time that his "steadily in view" policy will not suffice any longer. One thing I could not understand, and that was the admonition he gave to mem-bers of the Council who were likely to vote for the second reading of this Bill. He said that the Council would get a very bad name in London, and that we are going to promote an undertaking which would not be in keeping with the honourable dealings of this Council. I am somewhat puzzled about that. I could understand the indignation of a member like the Hon. Mr. Richmond, but not of a member like the Hon. Mr. Oliver. I wondered whether he ever heard that indignation was expressed all over the Colony of New Zealand when it became known that the railway from Dunedin to Port Chalmers had been sold to the then Government at an enormous price far beyond its real value, and whether the persons disposing of the railway did not feel that they had perhaps got the best of the colony in the transaction. No. Although it was stated that the company had got the best of the Government, still the gentlemen who undertook the sale of this railway were praised for their good business qualities. And therefore, if we offer the construction of this railway to a syndicate, and

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offer them a large reward in land for making it, giving them every information in our power and concealing nothing from them, I do not see how our dignity would suffer, themore so when we remember that this very project was mooted about fifteen years ago, and has been before the capitalists of the Old Country ever since. From time to time it has been revived; but still it has always been before the Home public, and consequently it cannot be said that we are taking advantage of them. The Hon. Mr. Waterhouse has on of them. The Holl, Mr. Waves, shown him-this, as on many other occasions, shown himself to hold statesmanlike opinions. What does he say? He does not condemn the Bill as a whole, but he proposes to make amendments in Committee—in fact, to surround this Bill with such conditions as to preserve the colony harmless; and that is, in my opinion, the best way of dealing with this question; and I hope that the Council will follow the line of action adopted by the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse. Let us see whether we cannot, in the interests of the colony, guard ourselves against all future claims, and I have no doubt that, if we set ourselves to work, it will not be so very difficult to do so. The Hon. Dr. Pollen has announced his intention to oppose this Bill, and, I haveno doubt, from honest convictions. But the honourable gentleman made a slight mistake in reference to the coal transport. Still, I am sure that in what he stated he was deceived himself. I can understand gentlemen whooppose this project from interested motives, but I cannot understand those who do so-simply from a party spirit. Then, the Hon. Mr. McLean has given us a statement of how small and large swindles are conducted in the money-market at Home, and I am sure those honourable gentlemen who were not aware of the fact must be thankful for the information; but I should like to remind the honourable gentleman that, in passing the second reading of the Bill-always provided that we shall be able to guard ourselves against the raising of future claims by the members of theproposed syndicate—we do nothing but what is. open, and simply a business transaction. cannot expect that men will risk their money without looking forward to make a profit of the transaction; and, if they find that the conditions are not favourable enough, they are not likely to accept the offer, and therefore we have nothing to do but guard ourselves against the future. As I stated before, this Bill is not in the least similar to the District Railways Act or the Railways Construction Act. Here we have to deal with a foreign company, and the claims of ratepayers are not in existence. And a foreign company will not find sufficient support in this Legislature to carry through a Bill giving them, at the expense of the colony, large sums of money. I am not the least afraid of that. And why should we not enter upon this as a real business transaction? We conceal nothing, but like an honest merchant we give a sample and say, "That is the price, and you. may accept it if you like, or leave it alone." We cannot do any more. Therefore I hope and.

trust the Council will look upon the matter in | it were found that the returns from the railway the same way. I regret the Hon. Mr. Chamberlin is not in his place for me to tell him how sorry I felt in the beginning of his speech last night, for I thought then he was going to do no less than move a motion of want of confidence in the Government; but afterwards I was very glad to find that better sense and better feeling prevailed, and he closed his speech by giving us to understand he would vote for the second reading of the Bill, reserving his right to vote against certain clauses in Committee, and against the Bill on the third reading. I think I have nothing more to say. Honourable members are anxious to have the debate closed, and, as we have to expect a long explanatory speech from the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, I will

now close my remarks. The Hon. Mr. HART.—I will not occupy the time of the Council at any length in endeavouring to justify the vote I am about to give. It seems to me, notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, that the responsibility rests upon this Council for all that will be done in pursuance of this Bill, and we cannot dissever the action of this Council from the action of the Government as authorized by this Bill if passed, and the action of the syndicate who will deal with the Government upon those persons who will be the ultimate contributors to the company which will have the performance and work of building the railway which we give them the power to do. We are responsible for it, and we cannot shelter ourselves from that responsibility by saying that we hold out to the syndicate a certain state of things, and that, if they choose to accept it, it is a matter of business-that we are merchants on the one side and they are merchants on the other. We know that we are putting in their hands an Act and a contract on which they will issue a prospectus which will hold out a brilliant prospect to people in London, who, being unable to get more than 3 or 4 per cent. interest on their money in England, will jump at a chance of getting 5 or 6 per cent. for it in the colony. And if we give the means of putting such a statement and such a brilliant prospect before them, we are responsible for that statement and for that brilliant prospect being held out. Without this Act it could not be done; by means of this Act it is done. But what are the facts before us? We have sent experts to examine the route. We have their report, and, although that report has been attempted to be discredited, we are left in this position: Either it is true, or we have not the means of putting before the syndicate or before the people whom they represent an accurate account of that with which we have to deal. We are blindly holding out an inaccurate statement for them to act upon, or it is an accurate statement, by which we bind ourselves when we are dealing And what does that statement amount to? That this work as a railway carrying goods and passengers will not pay working expenses, or more than working expenses, for the next ten years. And it would not be inconsistent in the least with that report if in effect

for passengers and goods would not pay 60 per cent. working expenses during these ten years. We have no prospect, from the best examination we have been able to make of the subject by experts, that the people who put their money into that enterprise will receive one penny from it for years. Then, what is the bait we are to put out to induce them to do this work? We are told that we are not going to burden the colony by this Bill; but we are going to give land of the colony to the value of £750,000 as a means of paying a dividend to this company till they find that the work they have performed is utterly unremunerative. And can it be said that this Council, or the Legislature as a whole, which authorizes blindly -- for we are doing it blindly—a contract which, the moment this Bill is passed, is in all its details outside the authority of Parliament to deal with-can it be said that in giving the enormous power which that puts into the hands of the Executive to deal with land of the colony worth £750,000, by a contract like this, we are doing our duty by the whole of the Colony of New Zealand? I think we are not doing so, and I think that to hold out such a prospect to the persons who pay their money in London is to take a wrong course. I am not now speaking of the syndicate: they merely go between the Government and the people who actually pay their money, and they will make their profit, whether the people who pay their money do so or not. The people who pay their money will take the representations of the syndicate, the contract, and the Act of this Legislature, and they will find it difficult to believe that the Legislature of a colony which has kept up its credit as New Zealand has done, has passed an Act which has practically put before them a scheme from which they will never receive a penny of return for their money, except what they get from the sale of the waste lands of the colony. They cannot do it. We are putting the means, I say, of positive deception in the hands of a syndicate, and we are responsible for that deception. Those are the grounds on which I shall oppose the second reading of this

and Nelson Railway Bill.

The Hon. Mr. PEACOCK.—I cannot for the life of me understand the remarks of my honourable friend Mr. Hart, for I do not think we are putting into the hands of the Government a power of deception. Nor do I think the people composing this syndicate are foolish enough to believe in any report except what they get themselves; and, as far as I understand, they are getting a report now, on which they will decide whether or not to go into this scheme. I believe this is simply a speculation, and they will consider whether it is a sufficiently good one for them or not. I have not had the advantage of hearing all the speeches of honourable members who have spoken against this Bill; but I heard the Hon. Mr. McLean, who accused the Canterbury members of a want of spirit of independence, and said they were bound to support the Bill. I could not make up my mind that he was himself expressing

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an independent opinion, for I think I never | before heard in this Council a speech so full of selfishness as that which was made by the honourable gentleman. He said we should exercise a proper discretion, and should have all plans and estimates submitted to us before authorizing any work; and he asked why we are not completing works under contract, or promised. The honourable gentleman mentioned very particularly one in his own province—the Otago Central—and said, "Let us finish that, before doing any other work." I say that was the most selfish remark I have ever heard made in this Council; and, if the speeches of all the opponents of the Bill are based on such selfishness, I say there is not one argument in the speeches delivered against this measure. I had not the advantage of hearing the Hon. Mr. Miller, but I am informed that he spoke very strongly against the Bill. I cannot divest myself of the belief that he was not showing an independent spirit either, but a very selfish one. The statement of another honourable member, I am told, is one of a very extraordinary character—that, because this Bill is one belonging to the policy of the present Government, he would vote against it, good or bad. That is no reason at all. I simply wish to say that I intend to vote for the Bill, because I think it will be a very good thing for the colony - not only for Canterbury in particular, but for the colony at large. not possibly see how we are going to run any risk, especially if we expunge clause 5. I am perfectly willing, though a Canterbury member, to assist in expunging that clause. If by giving up waste lands of the colony-for they are waste lands now—we can get them utilized in any way, even if we proposed to give double the quantity, I should be quite willing to enter into a contract with this syndicate. The argument about sea-carriage competing with the railway has already been refuted by a previous speaker. The Hon. Mr. McLean says it costs 11s. a ton to bring coal by sea to Lyttelton; but we have to remember that there is still a great cost in taking coal by railway from Lyttelton to where it is used—large quantities have to be carried right over the plain even to the foot of the hills, at enormous expense; and to obviate that would be one of the large savings effected by this railway, and therefore a profit. At this late hour I will not say any more, except to add that I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill, and, if it can be amended in Committee to the extent I have said, I shall

be very happy to support such an amendment. The Hon. Mr. G. R. JOHNSON.—I have attended very carefully to the debate on this Bill, and I must say it seems to me a very singular one, for, as far as I can recollect, there has not been one single good reason given for this Bill. And it appears to me very singular also that the honourable gentlemen who support this Bill have addressed themselves rather to attacking those honourable members who have spoken against the Bill, and imputing motives for their doing so, than setting themselves to work to prove that the line itself will

be of profit to the colony. They have made very indefinite assertions and statements, which they have not attempted to support by proofs. I merely mention this as one reason why I have come to the conclusion I have come to. I anticipated, during this debate, getting information as to this line which would probably induce me to support the Bill; but, as I said before, I have not heard one really good argument in favour of it. I will just refer to the Bill itself; and I would turn to its title. It is called "An Act to authorize the Construction of the East and West Coast (Middle Island) Railway, under 'The Railways Construction and Land Act, 1881,' with certain Modifications and Extensions of the said Act." It seems to me that this Bill is something more than "certain modifications and extensions" of that Act: it is a Bill in itself. If, as would seem by the 2nd clause, the Railways Construction and Land Act is incorporated with this Bill, it appears to me that the Bill contains a great deal more than there is any necessity for. I would point out that this railway was authorized under "The Railways Construction and Land Act, 1881," and the terms we then offered were considered very liberal and good. railway was only one of a number authorized by that Act; but, while some at least of the rest are in course of construction under the terms of the Act, it has been found, I suppose, that the inducements to make this railway under that Act have not been sufficient to cause any one to come forward and carry it out: not that it would not be the case presently, but it is not so at the present moment. I must say I do not understand why we should hurry to give so much larger a bonus in order to have it carried out quickly, whilst we do not hold out the same offers to the persons who undertook the other railways mentioned in the Act of 1881. Then, again, this line does not stand by itself. There is another included in the Bill, a very peculiar little line, and it is somewhat curious that it has not been mentioned by any previous speaker. It is the line from Putaruru to Rotorua. That, I believe, is part of a line now actually under construction under the Act of 1881. I speak under correction.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—That is not commenced yet.

The Hon. Mr. G. R. JOHNSON.—Why that poor unfortunate little line should be placed in a different position from that of others I cannot understand. It is only to have 30 per cent. of land, while the others are to have 50 per cent. Probably we shall have some explanation of that; but it seems to me that it is not giving fair terms to all alike. In the précis of this Bill it is stated, "The necessity for this Bill arises from the fact that the provisions of the Act of 1881 (Railways Construction Act, herein called 'the principal Act'), with respect to borrowing money on debentures, are unworkable." Now, I ask, why do we have anything whatever to do with authorizing the issuing of debentures by railways? We have had quite recently very serious instances before us of debentures being issued by railways under the

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authority of Acts of Parliament, where great | difficulty indeed has been the result. I cannot myself understand why it should be necessary at all to refer to the issuing of debentures. The syndicate or company, or whatever it is, will have the same power as any other company in this matter. It will have power to issue debentures on its uncalled-up or unpaid capital. Other companies do not come to Parliament seeking this power; and I do not see why in this case we should make any departure from the ordinary law in this respect. It is this very question which has caused us so much difficulty in the matter of the district railways, and I must say I should look upon the Bill in a very different light if all reference to debentures were omitted from it. In various clauses in this Bill we speak of debentures—"Company may borrow money on debentures," "the company is lawfully authorized to borrow," and so on, again and again: in fact, a very large number of the clauses are taken up with this question of debentures. Then, there is a declaration which is tantamount to authorization. Under this Bill, it seems to me, we are making Parliament itself responsible to a certain degree for issuing these debentures. I must say I look upon that with very great suspicion and very great dread. I feel as certain as possible—there is not the least doubt—that, if this railway is made under the present or any other Bill, we shall presently have to buy it from the company or syndicate, and shall have to pay for it very much more than if the colony itself undertook the work and carried it out as it has carried out other works. I will not trouble the Council any longer, and I will not refer to those clauses which have been so much referred to already. I feel, with other honourable gentlemen who have spoken, that this 5th clause is extremely objectionable; but my objection is not confined to that clause alone. I think the clauses referring to debentures and several other clauses are objectionable, and I should like very much to see this Bill laid on one side, and rather that a pledge should be given by the Government that they would take up this railway themselves and carry out the work. There is no doubt the circumstances are very much changed since the passing of the District Railways Act and the Railways Construction Act. In those days we certainly had not the power to raise the money to carry out those works, and therefore there was, to a certain extent, reason for bringing in Bills of that description. But now I believe there would be no obstacle in the way of obtaining sufficient money to carry out those Whilst the Government remain the owners of the main lines in the colony, it must follow that the Government in the end must purchase railways of this description; and that means that they will be taken over at a cost which will in the end be much larger than if the colony undertook the works in the first

The Hon. Mr. ACLAND.—I will not trouble the Council with many words on this occasion, but, as in the case of the District Railways Bill,

I do not like altogether to give a silent vote. This Bill is a very important one, and I think we must generally allow that it has received and is receiving from the Council that consideration to which its importance entitles it. For myself, although I do feel called upon to vote for the second reading of the Bill, I cannot say that I give altogether a hearty assent. There are some very objectionable features in it, more especially that one which has been more or less referred to by nearly every honourable member who has spoken—the 5th clause. I think it absolutely necessary that that should be struck out of the Bill, because it puts the colony in very much the worse position in the bargain between ourselves and the company, and empowers the Governor, as soon as the railway is completed, to take over the line. No doubt it is intended that that should be part of the contract; but it might be for an indefinite time as the clause stands, although a definite time, of course, might be fixed by the contract. If it stated that the Government were to take 90 per cent. of the profits there would be no harm in that, but by this clause we might be bound over to pay to the company half of the gross receipts. In the Bill as it was introduced the amount was limited to 30 per cent. for the first year and 35 per cent. afterwards. Now even that limit is taken out, and, though I do not say it would be the case, yet, under the contract, it is quite possible for the company to insist on getting half the receipts.

There is nothing in this Bill to prevent that
being agreed to. Looking to the nature of the
country, the opinions of engineers, and the estimates of the traffic that there will be on the line, it seems extremely doubtful whether it can be worked for a number of years at a profit at all; and in that case the loss to the colony on this would be £30,000, or £40,000, or £50,000 a year. I was in doubt about it previously, but it has been shown by the Hon. Mr. Lahmann that, if gold were found on the lands granted to the company, it would not belong to the company: if it did, that would be very objectionable, because it would lead to all sorts of complications. We know what a class the goldminers are. They think they have a perfect right to go to work wherever gold may be found; and go to work they would, whether it was on private land or not. There is, no doubt, in the proposal the very pleasant element of speculation. Of course it requires a good deal of speculation to get a company to take up the matter. No doubt they speculate upon the probability of finding minerals, and I am sure I hope they will be successful in finding minerals such as iron, coal, copper, tin, or lead. We have heard of tin being found in the Middle Island, but I am afraid that is too good to be true. No doubt there is mineral wealth there, and if discovered the shareholders may make very handsome profits; but, if they do not, then I fear it will be a failure, so far as dividends are concerned, for a long time to come. There is another thing also which is certainly rather peculiar, and that is that when there is so much talk about the perpetual leasing of land

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and the nationalization of land, just at this time a proposition should be brought forward to hand over half a million of acres, or perhaps more, to a private company. However, that is considered the only way of making the line. I have no doubt that, when the Hon. the Colonial Secretary is replying, he will explain what is meant by taking land entirely on one side of the line if there is not land available on both sides, because it is perfectly clear that there must be some limit placed. Of course, if al-lowed to go fifty miles from the line, they may go a hundred, and take land all over the country. I think there will have to be some definite limit placed to that. In looking at the Bill, what made me feel that I must support it was, that the railway must be looked upon as part of the great trunk system, for this railway is required to complete the railway communication of the Middle Island. The fear has been expressed by some honourable members--and I think it is not without foundation—that the syndicate will have some claim upon the colony in case the railway is a total failure. The Bill certainly shuts that out; but that fact may not in the least prevent it being done. We have had a notable instance of that within the last few days in the case of the District Railways Bill. That Bill, at all events for the present, is thrown out; but—as was remarked by one honourable member of the Council in connection with it—in this case, should the railway prove a failure, an effort will also be made to compel the colony to take it off the hands of the company. Probably, as the Hon. Mr. G. R. Johnson has observed, it would be better if in the debentures the colony was not mentioned at all, but the company were simply left to make out their own debentures in their own name. I will just allude to the speech of the Hon. Mr. Reeves, because, being a Canterbury man, and having been there at the time the railway system was initiated, I would say that this proposal should be looked upon as a fresh start, and as upon entirely different lines in the opening of railway communication. I remember Mr. Moorhouse being talked of as being a madman; but still he was going on very sensible ground. He knew that, as soon as he got the tunnel finished, it would open on to a vast plain, and that it would not be a simple waste of money, but that thousands of acres which have since brought wealth to the colony would be opened up; and we see in that country now thousands of acres of wheat and oats, and thousands of sheep, that are being raised for the Home market. But here the case On the one side there is only is different. a population of about twenty-four thousand people, and the traffic would not be very great. In point of fact it is only a question now whether the coal traffic, with such grades as there will be on that line, will be able to compete with the traffic by sea. I very much doubt if it can: in fact, I believe that there is no question about it at all, for I think it is impossible that we can take coal to Lyttelton and supply steamers there at the same rate by rail that it can be brought by sea. Still, it is very true he made on that occasion, would be surprised

that they may supply Canterbury inland by means of the railway at a cheaper rate; but, as far as the coast is concerned, I am fully convinced that that must be done by sea. course it is just a question of which can be done most cheaply. As I have said, I shall support the second reading of the Bill, but hope to see the 5th clause struck out in Committee. If that is not struck out, I shall certainly reserve to myself the right to vote against

the Bill on its third reading.

The Hon. Mr. WIGLEY. - After the very exhaustive discussion that has taken place there is very little left to say on the question; but I wish to say that I shall not vote for the amendment of the Hon. Mr. Miller, but for the second reading of the Bill, reserving to myself the right to criticise the 5th clause, and also the 1st subsection of the 19th clause. I cannot understand how that got introduced at all. It seems to me to be rather an impedi-ment to the Bill than an assistance to it. I do not see what the Nelson line has got to do with it, and I shall propose that it be taken out of the Bill. I think that in making these regulations we are bound to see that to a certain extent the interests of the syndicate are regarded. We are not here to say that the company shall make what arrangements they please. We are in some sense bound to see that they are protected, and not, as one honourable gentleman has thrown out the suggestion, that they are to be treated as in a different position from men in the colony who take up works. There can be no great difference between men investing money in the colony, whether they are residents or not. If we say that if they are settlers we must assist them, then if foreign capitalists take over this railway and carry out this large work, we should be acting unjustly in saying we cannot give them the same assistance as we would residents of the country. I think we should be careful in that, for they will be as much justified in their claims, though residents in another country, as they would be if they were residing in New Zealand. I think we ought not to insinuate that in future we intend to make a distinction between them. I shall support the second reading of the

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY .- Sir, my duty to-night is of a much easier character than I apprehended it would be when I moved the second reading of the Bill. I have listened with a great deal of pleasure, and, I may say also, with a great degree of pain, to the arguments and speeches of honourable members upon this Bill; and I have not felt so much pain in connection with any speech delivered tonight as in connection with that of my honourable and learned friend Mr. Hart. I am very greatly surprised at his speech, because it is simply an excuse which he has given in justification of the vote which he is to give on this occasion. Any one listening to that honourable gentleman on the District Railways Bill, and hearing the able-the very able-speech which

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to hear his speech to-night. I cannot for the life of me understand it. I have listened to the speeches of that honourable gentleman for the last fifteen or sixteen years, and I must confess myself astonished to hear his observations to-night in reference to what he calls the justification of the vote he is about to give. There fication of the vote he is about to give. is not a more logically-minded man in the Council, there is no more able man in the Council, than the honourable gentleman; but I cannot understand his reason for opposing a measure which will not burden the colony in the slightest possible degree; and I am greatly pained to find him speaking against this Bill. I confess I have not heard a single argument in opposition to the Bill, except the one that it is too soon by ten years—I think that is the time. That is the only argument used against the measure. I have listened with great anxiety to the Cassandra-like utterances of the honourable gentleman whom I must now term the leader of the Opposition in the Council. The lugubrious tones in which his speech was delivered were very remarkably like those of the late Minister of Lands, delivered in another place. The information he had was of the most accurate character, and he had evidently learned his lesson very well indeed; but there was the cloven foot showing right through that speech. From the moment he commenced till he sat down, the idea was that the Westport coal mine must be supported at any risk, and that there must be no inland traffic. That is the key of the honourable gentleman's speech. He went into minute calculations as to the carriage of minerals. I think he called coal a mineral; and, as there is no one more ac-curate in his use of English than the honourable gentleman usually is, I was surprised at that. He had forgotten his early lessons, and had come to the conclusion that coal was a mineral. I was under the impression that coal belonged to the vegetable kingdom. But the honourable gentleman read extracts here and there from a report which has been printed and widely circulated: he picked out a particular portion of it which suited him, and the rest of it he was good enough not to read at all. Of course upon him must rest the responsibility of that proceeding. I have nothing to do with that, nor am I going to refer to that, more than to simply say this: that it is a pity that the honourable gentleman did not give the numbers of those particular paragraphs and ask that they should be taken as read. The honourable gentleman's speech, I think, has been what may fairly be termed shredded to pieces by the honourable gentleman who replied to him, and whose presence in the Council is a matter for congratulation. It is pleasing to me to hear, after the lapse of a number of years, that honourable gentleman speak-ing again in the Parliament of the colony; and the manner in which he dealt with the Hon. Mr. Miller's speech is quite sufficient, and will probably be a justification for my not referring to it any further. Now, Sir, there is a fallacy, it seems to me, underlying every speech which has been made against the Bill, and that is

that the Government are about to construct this line of railway. If honourable gentlemen will refer to the 12th section of this Bill they will see that nothing of the kind is to be done. I have no hesitation in saying that, so far as. I am concerned, if any language can make it plainer I am prepared to adopt it. The words are-"No claim of any debenture-holder, or of any creditor of the company, shall attach to or be paid out of the public revenues of New Zealand or by the Government thereof." Now, if any language can be intelligible it appears to me that that is. All that has been adduced to show that the Government will have to dothis is nothing but the merest assertion; and assertion is not argument. There is nothing plainer, to my mind, than the meaning of that. 12th section, and it shows clearly that the Government have no intention of accepting any liability whatever in connection with this scheme. We have heard arguments with regard to the Lyttelton and Christehurch tunnel, and we heard that the gentleman who devised the scheme to pierce the hills between Lyttelton and Christchurch was about to be annihilated for it. Was it of greater importance in those days to have that done than it is now to do this work, which has been so ably described by my honourable friend Mr. Reeves? What will be the position of things in the next ten years? Who can tell? Can any one in this Council for a moment suppose that, in the progress of events, much greater reasons can beadduced for the construction of this line than could be urged for the making of that tunnel. when it was made?

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—Wait till then. The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—The honourable gentleman, I think, would be content to wait for ever, and it would be possible. for him to get that petty scheme of his carried into execution. He has shown in this Council on this question a degree of selfishness. which I have no hesitation in saying is remarkable. He has emphasized his remarks, repeated them four times over; and when he referred to the District of Nelson I saw the honourable gentleman, more than once, shake a paper over the head of the Hon. Mr. Barnicoat, with a view of impressing his mind with the fact that he came from Nelson. The honourable member may laugh, but that is the fact, and I think the Council will bear me out when I say that that was a noticeable fact. more than one occasion the honourable gentleman referred to the cost of carriage of coal in a very minute way. The whole matter was described in the manner of one taking a very deep interest in it, and not only in it as affecting this railway, but as affecting another matter also. The honourable gentleman was good enough to refer to the Colonial Treasurer of the colony in a manner unworthy of him. • I am sorry to be obliged to say what I am going to say, but I was very greatly surprised that an honourable gentleman, whom I believe to be the very soul of honour, should have referred in the manner in which he did to the Colonial. Treasurer-

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—In what way did | I refer to him.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I will tell the honourable gentleman. He informed us that the Colonial Treasurer was a financial dictator; that he was a speculator; that he was—well, I do not know what else he did not say of him.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—I rise to a point of order. I never mentioned the Colonial Treasurer's name in my speech. The honourable member may make what misrepresentations he pleases as to my arguments—and he is misrepresenting them; but I must deny what he has stated with respect to what I said on the point in question. I did not use the Colonial Treasurer's name.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—The

honourable gentleman said this colony is ground down by a financial dictator.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—I did not say

" ground down."

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Well, the honourable gentleman will be good enough to correct his speech in *Hansard*. But I have taken down the words he used. He said that the colony was ground down by a financial dictator, and that the honourable gentleman's posterity would remain behind when that financial speculator had departed from these shores.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—No, no. The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I have my recollection of it, as well as the honourable member; and I will tell him this: that I hope this work which is about to be inaugurated by this Bill, the second reading of which I hope the Council will have the good sense to pass to-night, will be a lasting monument of the sagacity and wisdom of the Colonial Treasurer when my honourable friend is in a higher sphere. Now, honourable members will pardon me if I do not refer to the speeches which have been made; but it would be tiresome to the Council if I did so, and I have no intention of doing so. I hope honourable members will not think it any reflection if I do not refer to their speeches, but there is one honourable gentleman's speech to which I must of necessity refer, and that is the speech of my honourable friend Mr. Oliver. I must say that I might characterize that speech as being the same as the Hon. Mr. Miller's: he might have written underneath that speech the words, "Them's my sentiments." That was exactly the character of the honourable gentleman's speech. there, again, we see that memorable port which is now going to be made one of the most mag-nificent ports of the Colony of New Zealand. I will say that the speech, from beginning to end, was "Westport Harbour."

The Hon. Mr. OLIVER.—I never mentioned

Westport.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—No, I know he did not: he was too careful to mention Westport, and so was the Hon. Mr. Miller; but, at the same time, we can read between the lines, and sometimes it is very desirable to do so, and one could not help noticing that the whole argument of the honourable gentleman and of the Hon. Mr. Miller was based on the cost of carriage of coal by land and the cost of carriage by sea. Now, that is not at all the correct view to take.

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The Hon. Mr. OLIVER.—I had no such thing

in my mind

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—It gives me very great pleasure to know that the honourable gentleman had not, and I accept that statement. I believe that he is incapable of doing anything that is not right. I cannot help interpreting the speech as I have done, especially when I recollect the antagonism that has been exhibited towards another measure of the same character introduced by the Government. I shall not now refer to the speech more particularly, as I intended to do, because of the honourable member's disavowal; but he spoke of "this rugged country," and used every expression of the kind. He mentioned hills and valleys, and everything but the one colonial word "gully." Anything I can say just now will have very little influence upon honourable members who are about to vote on the question, and I will only refer to the memorable speech of the Hon. Mr. McLean. That honourable gentleman gave us to-night quite a moral lecture, which will not be soon forgotten by this Council. He told us of the manner in which syndicates are formed, and in which the operations of these syndicates are carried out, as well as the whole history of their functions. There was only one thing that he forgot, and that was to tell us how he obtained his information; although he told us of his experience when he first entered political life, and of his political education. He was good enough to refer to his visit to London, and how he gave information to people there. I do not think he ever gets on his legs without referring to the fact that he was lately in London, and stating that the whole of London was running after him for information; but I take the liberty of differing from him, and thinking that the whole of London did not run after him for information. It seems to me that the opposition of honourable members to this Bill is given under the impression that the Government are about to undertake the responsibility of constructing this railway; but that certainly is not what is provided by the Bill. We have heard honourable members, on more than one occasion in the debate, say that, if it were proposed to borrow the money for the purpose of constructing this railway, they would sooner support it than the proposal that is now made. But, if such a proposal as that were made to the Council or to the House, the Bill would not last five minutes. I believe the honourable members who made use of that expression did not mean for a single moment what they said. I believe that, if any Government or any party, in the present criti-cal period of the colony, were to propose a scheme of the kind for the borrowing of money for constructing this railway, they would not be listened to for five minutes; and I should be one of those who would kick such a proposal out of the four corners of this room. But, when I see a syndicate is prepared to take up

a large matter of this kind, I am not afraid to give them reasonable assistance in doing a very valuable—a great colonial—work. Honourable members will remember that, when the public works policy was inaugurated, this was one of the things that were in contemplation at that time; but, in consequence of pressure brought to bear on the Government, it was found not possible to carry it out; and this was caused partly by the honourable gentleman who is now opposing this measure—I am referring to the Hon. Mr. McLean. The pressure which he and the constituencies of Dunedin brought to bear on the Government was in favour of connecting Christchurch and Dunedin by rail, and he should bear in mind now that there are other parts of the colony that have as much right to consideration as those two cities. The construction of this East and West Coast Railway at the present time is too serious, too large, an undertaking for the colony; but I can see no reason why, seeing we can get it done for a small consideration, we should not lend our aid to it. Great objection has been taken to the 5th clause, but I am at a loss to understand what honourable members mean. I am under the impression that they have not read the Bill, for if they look at it they will find that it has been so altered by the House of Representatives as to meet the demands of any reasonable person. However, that is a matter the Committee will have to consider. I am not going to dictate to this Council: I never will dictate to the Council as to what they should do with the measures brought before them. I merely say this: that this is a matter of colonial im-portance—a matter of the greatest importance -for the outside public, and I trust they will be prepared to assist us in dealing with it. I trust the good sense of the Council will be shown by allowing this Bill to be read a second time.

The Council divided on the question, "That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question."

AYES, 18. Dignan Acland Peacock Baillie Fraser Reeves Barnicoat Kohere Revnolds Brandon Lahmann Waterhouse Brett Martin Whitmore Buckley, P. A. Ngatata Wigley. Noes, 13.

Grace McLean Pollen Hart Miller Richmond, J. C. Henderson Nurse Scotland Johnson, G. R. Oliver Wilson. Johnston, J.

For. Against. Campbell. Mantell. Majority for, 5. Bill read a second time.

**TRUSTEES'** AND EXECUTORS' COM-PANIES SHAREHOLDERS LIABILITY BILL.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. The Hon. Mr. McLEAN, in resuming the

debate on the second reading of this Bill, thought it would be wise for the Council to allow this Bill to lapse, with a view to the Government introducing a general Bill on the subject. He noticed that the Committee recently appointed to deal with this matter had brought up a report to which his name was attached, notwithstanding the fact that on his own motion his name had been struck off the list of the Committee. He objected to his name being retained on the list under the circum-stances. He could not understand such a provision as that contained in clause 2 being inserted in the Bill, unless it was for the purpose of preventing these companies from starting. With regard to the provision that the company should give security, no objection could be taken to that clause; but, as to the provision that the rate of commission was not to exceed that fixed by the Judge, that was absurd, for how could it exceed the rate fixed by the Judge? There were some useful clauses in the Bill, however; but he would like to see them embodied in a Bill to be brought forward by the Government. There ought to be a Bill to compel private people in business acting as trustees to keepthe trust funds separate from their own affairs, the necessity for such a provision as this being evidenced by a recent case in Wellington. He hoped the Council would see their way to vote against this Bill, and allow the Government to bring in the Bill recommended by a Select Committee.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS was thoroughly satisfied that the Government were quite as anxious as the Hon. Mr. Wilson to place those who intrusted property to these trustees in as safe a position as possible. For his own part, he did not care what restrictions were placed on these companies; but a Bill of this character ought not to be taken up by a private individual. It ought to have far more consideration than the Hon. Mr. Wilson had had time to give it. It should receive the full consideration of every member of the Government, and be submitted to Parliament after the scheme had been well matured. He trusted that the honourable member would not press the Bill this session. If he was anxious that the Bill should be read a second time, he (Mr. Reynolds) had not the least objection to that being done to affirm the principle, on condition that the Bill should then be allowed to drop for the present.

The Hon. Captain FRASER also hoped that, if the Council accorded the Bill a second reading, the honourable the mover would not proceed with it further for the present.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND thought that the real objection to these companies was the mingling of two kinds of business in the hands of these companies. They undertook all pro-fessions; there was no sort of business on the face of the earth that these companies could not take on themselves to transact if they could get it to transact. It seemed to him that a company that undertook to make advances upon properties was unfit to carry on trust business. On the whole, the Council ought to read the Bill a second time; but whether it was desirable to proceed with it further this session he left to his honourable friend Mr. Wilson.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN thought those honourable gentlemen who said that attention had not been given to this measure were under a mistake. They forgot that this question was referred to a Select Committee of the Council, and in that way it had received very much greater consideration probably than some measures that had been recently passed by the Council. That Committee was so impressed with the very enormous disproportion between the liabilities intended to be assumed by these companies and the extreme minuteness of their assets that it was felt to be an imperative duty on their part to recommend the Council to make provision at once to put an end to the anomaly, and, pending general legislation on the subject, to introduce into the Bill then before the Committee a saving clause. He hoped that, in allowing the Bill to be read a second time, the Council would recognize that it was the duty of the State, when companies under-took public trusts in this way, to see that there should be at least some assets in decent and reasonable proportion to the liabilities they were authorized by the Acts of the Legislature to undertake.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY thought the Council would do well to let the Bill be read a second time, in order that they might amend it in Committee. The question had been well ventilated in the Council, and it was useless to occupy further time in discussing the matter.

occupy further time in discussing the matter. The Hon. Mr. WILSON thought it was an extraordinary thing that an honourable gentleman occupying the position of Mr. Reynolds should attempt to lecture him, and say that this was a Bill which should not be brought forward by a private member. At whose request was it that he (Mr. Wilson) brought it in? At the request of Mr. Reynolds's chief, the Premier.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—I do not care or that.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON would have thought that the Premier's opinion would stand a great deal higher than almost anybody's in the Council. He made no comparisons. And when this was approved by the Hon. Mr. Stout, the fact ought to weigh somewhat; and he would recommend the honourable gentleman to use more moderate language in future. This Bill would have passed but for one reason: there happened to be two or three members in the Council who were personally interested in its not passing.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN rose to a point of order. The honourable gentleman had said that he (Mr. McLean) was personally interested in the matter.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—Not you.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN reminded the Council that he had already stated he was not personally interested, either directly or indirectly, in any of these companies.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON did not refer to the honourable gentleman, and quite accepted his

Hon. Mr. J. C. Richmond

statement that he had not any personal interest in the matter; but he knew that other parties had a personal interest. Would the Hon. Mr. Reynolds tell him that he was not interested? He (Mr. Wilson) knew that he was. Would the Hon. Captain Fraser tell him he was not interested? He knew that he-was. The Hon. Captain FRASER.—I never denied

The Hon. Mr. WILSON said that there was undoubtedly a personal interest involved here. The Hon. Mr. McLean should have been called to order for the language he had used. The honourable gentleman had called this a preposterous clause, and any tiro knew that it was not right to call any clause of an Act in force preposterous. This clause was almost a verbatim copy of a clause in the English Insur-ance Companies Act; and could any one say that these benevolent philanthropic companies, which were promoted for the taking care of other people's money, and speculating with it and earning commissions—could any one say that the directors, all men with the most benevolent objects, ought not to be under the same liability as directors of insurance companies? The Hon. Mr. McLean had said that to make the liability unlimited in the Bill would kill these companies. Well, the honourable gentleman must have had experience of insurance companies; and how was it it had not quashed them?

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN said there was no such thing as the liability of insurance companies' directors being unlimited and that of

shareholders limited.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON said, even though this measure were defeated now, it was absolutely certain some such measure must soon be passed. He had no hesitation in saying that these private Acts were obtained impro-perly: the Council had acceded to them without consideration, and it was only after the discussions that had recently taken place that the Council had become aware of the importance of the subject with which they were dealing. As to the question of liability, that would be fairly open to discussion in Committee. It was very easy for the honourable gentleman to say it was a crude measure. That might be said of any measure. He denied that it was a crude It came from an authority which measure. was far better than that of the Hon. Mr. McLean, whose opinion on a technical question of this kind he should not take at all. He was quite prepared to stand by the measure, and asserted that it was a very fair one, and was calculated to effect the purpose which it was intended to serve. He admitted that the question of the respective liability of the directors and the shareholders was a fair subject for discussion in Committee. It was conceded that these companies were of such a peculiar nature that the business would get into the hands of a very few persons indeed. Practically, the manager and the chairman would manage the whole business, and it was considered by the Committee that to make the liability of the directors unlimited was the only

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check that could be put upon them. These companies had begun wrong from the very first. They had gone outside the law by the Acts they had obtained in a wrong way, which Acts entirely overrode the common law and the statute law. The Hon. Mr. McLean had made statements which were inconsistent with facts. He asserted that the Judge had discretion in fixing the amount of the commission to be charged by the company; but that was not so, and if the honourable gentleman looked at the articles of association he would see that the company itself fixed the commission.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—I did not say so. The Hon. Mr. WILSON would ask, why should not the Judge have discretion in fixing the amount of the commission to be charged by the company, just as he did that of private trustees? It gave him a feeling of great distrust that this suggestion as to liability should be objected to. There was nothing by this Bill imposed upon companies which every private trustee was not bound by law to now. should these companies be in any exceptional position? The whole of this Bill was to put these trustee companies in the same position as private trustees; and he thought, therefore, it ought to commend itself to the Council. He hoped that section 4 would be agreed to, and thought he could not make any pledge as to its subsequent stages: if it could be pressed on, it should be.

The Hon. Captain FRASER wished to know whether this was an ex post facto legislation with regard to the existing directors of the companies. If it was not, he should vote with the Hon. Mr. Wilson.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON said he did not want the honourable gentleman's vote.

Bill read a second time.

On the question, That the Bill be ordered to

be committed on Tuesday next,

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS said he should oppose the committal of the Bill on Tuesday or any other day. He wished to say it did not matter twopence to him whether the honourable member had got the opinion of the Premier as to whether the Bill was a good one, or not. It was not at all with the consent of the Government as a Government that the Premier had offered any opinion on it. The honourable member might come and ask him (Mr. Reynolds) about some Bill, and he might, without giving it much consideration, say it was a good Bill.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—I should not do it. The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS said the honourable gentleman seemed to take it for granted that the Government approved his Bill. Now, he (Mr. Reynolds) believed the Government did not approve of his Bill, but would prefer something better.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—Surely the honourable gentleman does not profess to be the Go-

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—Yes, he does. Of course he is the Government.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS said he thought a Bill of this description ought not to be al- | for freight on the railway to Invercargill, the

lowed to be carried through that Council by a private member. The Government was the proper party to bring in a Bill of this kind. It was all very well to deny it, but he knew perfectly well that these companies might to a considerable extent take from the pickings of the legal profession, of which the Hon. Mr. Wilson was a member. He knew that perfectly well; and he had heard it stated by legal gentlemen themselves that the establishment of such companies was very unfair to them. It came, therefore, with very bad grace from the Hon. Mr. Wilson that he should be urging on this Bill, at this late period of the session too, instead of allowing the Government time to introduce a Bill next session which would meet all the necessities of the case.

Motion agreed to.

The Council adjourned at twenty minutes to ten o'clock p.m.

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Friday, 24th October, 1884.

Bluff-Invercargill Railway Tariff—Railway Sleepers
—Kawakawa-Hokianga Railway—Reefton Volunteers—Mosgiel Stone Quarry—Floods—Buller
Crown Lands—Roundhill Railway-siding—Mahurangi Lime—Kaitangata and Tuakitoto Lakes—
Legislative Council—Pembroke Telephone—Ashley Railway-station—Auckland-Taranaki Railway—Torpedo Boat for the Bluff—Addington
Workshops—Mr. Gisborne's Book on New Zealand
—North Island Trunk Railway—Public Works
Statement—Bankruptcy Bill—Police Offences
Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

# BLUFF-INVERCARGILL RAILWAY TARIFF.

Mr. JOYCE asked the Minister for Public Works, If he is aware of the anomalous nature of the railway tariff between Bluff and Invercargill; and, if so, will he take steps for its rectification? He might state that some years ago the rates charged on goods carried on the railway between the Bluff and Invercargill were fixed on the basis of ships' measurement, which was quite contrary to the practice uniformly adopted on other sections of the railways of the colony. The effect of this anomalous and pernicious practice was very unfair, and bore most heavily on the business people of Invercargill; but, though it had been brought under the notice of successive Governments, no remedy had yet been applied. He would not take up the time of the House by making many general remarks on the subject, but he would just mention one case, the particulars of which had been forwarded to him, as illustrative of the unfairness of the system. Some packages of tubs and buckets arrived at the Bluff from Wolverhampton, and the charge for freight to the Bluff was £1 5s. 6d. According to the ordinary tariff on the railways of the colony it would have cost 7s. 9d. actual dead-weight being 17 cwt. 2qr. 18lb.; but the goods were reckoned, by "measurement," at 5 tons 10 cwt. 2qr., and the importer was charged £3 10s. 5d. for their conveyance from the Bluff to Invercargill. That was to say, as much was charged under this special rate for carrying the goods from the Bluff to Invercargill as would have been charged under ordinary rates for carrying them two or three hundred miles along the main line of the railway. It was even said that the same goods could be brought from Lyttelton to Invercargill more cheaply than they could be brought from the Bluff to Invercargill, a distance of twenty miles. He would not detain the House longer, but he thought the matter demanded attention, and therefore he had put the question.

and therefore he had put the question.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON, in reply, said if the honourable gentleman, when giving notice of this question, had put on the Paper a short account of the particular matter to which he had now called attention, he might have been able to reply to him as regarded that particular The honourable gentleman referred to the charges on the Bluff-Invercargill line as being anomalous: but the fact was that the same rule obtained on all port lines in the colony; and it had been found that a very great saving of time and also of trouble was brought about in favour of the merchants by adopting the ships' measurement in making charges for the carriage of goods on the port Speaking generally, he was convinced that it would be a great mistake to abolish the system at present in force; but, if any particular point were brought before him in which there might be amendments of the system with advantage, he would be most happy to give it consideration.

### RAILWAY SLEEPERS.

Mr. JOYCE asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether the process of creosoting native timber railway sleepers has been tested; and, if so, with what result? He might state that in 1882 he brought this matter before the House in the shape of an objection to the conditions attached to the contract for creosoting sleepers. His objection on behalf of saw-millers in the district in which he resided was that it was not fair to expect them, for the sake of a contract for the supply of 50,000 sleepers, to start, as they would have to do, creosoting works, the plant in connection with which would cost two or three thousand pounds. He believed that it was in consequence of his interference at that time that the contract had fallen through. It was then pointed out that the cost of creosoting sleepers was only two or three pence, and that the sleepers themselves could be got for 1s. to 1s. 6d. each. Since that time an enormous number of sleepers had been imported from abroad, and it was because of that circumstance that he put this question on the Order Paper. The honourable member for Dunedin Central had anticipated him slightly—although his (Mr. Joyce's) question was given notice of first—by his question of the previous day; but he nevertheless desired to put his question now, Mr. Joyce

in order to give prominence to the subject, and to express the view that they should not continue to import sleepers. A most experienced man in Dunedin had expressed the opinion, in a letter to the honourable member for Caversham, which that honourable gentleman had been good enough to place in his hands, that the colony, instead of importing sleepers, should be a large exporter of sleepers; and he believed that, were the crosoting system properly brought into practice, the colony would be able to largely export sleepers. It was for the purpose of eliciting from the Minister for Public Works an expression of opinion as to whether the Government should not take upon itself the work of crosoting—instead of leaving it to the saw-millers, for it was an entirely different branch of business from their own—that he put the question standing in his name.

he put the question standing in his name.
Mr. E. RICHARDSON, in reply, said that
he hoped, for the sake of the honourable member himself, that the statement he had just made, that it was owing to his interference that the contract for the supply of 50,000 sleepers had broken down, was not correct; because in the ordinary course, owing to that failure, the sureties were now being sued for a considerable sum of money on their bonds. The honourable gentleman, in putting the question, had introduced another matter of much more importance than that referred to in the question on the Paper, and that was, whether the Government were prepared to take in hand the work of creosoting timber. He was not prepared to answer that question just now; but, as to the question of which notice had been given, the answer he had to give was in the affirmative, and that the result was satisfactory.

Mr. JOYCE might be permitted to explain that the extent of his interference would be found by the Minister for Public Works if he referred to Hansard of 1882, Vol. XLIII., page 817. The honourable gentleman would derive some useful information on the subject if he looked at the report of what then took place.

KAWAKAWA-HOKIANGA RAILWAY.

Mr. HOBBS asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether he will have a detailed survey made of the railway route from Kawakawa to Hokianga? He would like to add the words, "during the ensuing recess."

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said that, in answer

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said that, in answer to the question on the Paper, he had to say it would be the duty of the Minister for Public Works presently to have this line surveyed, no doubt; but he could not promise the honourable member that it would be done during the coming recess.

# REEFTON VOLUNTEERS.

Mr. MENTEATH asked the Minister of Defence, Whether it is his intention to permit the formation of a country corps of Volunteers at Reefton, in the Inangahua? As the question of national defence had been before the House and the country for discussion on several occasions, perhaps it would not be out of place if

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he showed that the granting of this application | would materially add to the strength of their national defences. Most of the corps at present in existence in New Zealand were drawn from agricultural districts, or districts which fringed the seaboard. In the event of any attempt at invasion, those corps could not be readily shifted from their localities to any distant point, they being to a great extent tied to their homes, and being married men with families; and there were very few corps in the colony available for reserves, who could be moved from the places where they were raised and shifted to a point along the scaboard. He would point out that a corps formed exclusively of miners would be the best corps and the most easily mobilized that New Zealand could have. They were a splendid body of men, reared among the mountains, accustomed to the hardest of labour; and they also had this advantage over agriculturists-

Mr. SPEAKER thought the honourable member was introducing debatable matter.

Mr. BALLANCE replied that, without questioning the superiority of miners as material for Volunteers, he would state that the Government had considered this matter, and were not prepared to accept the services of this corps at present.

# MOSGIEL STONE QUARRY.

Mr. FULTON asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether, in view of the Government having obtained possession of the stone quarry at Mosgiel, he will make such arrangements as will enable local bodies in the neighbourhood to obtain road metal at a reasonable rate; or whether he would be willing to set aside a portion of the quarry for the use of the local bodies under such rules as shall be in the interests of the whole? He was advised by letter that, in consequence of the Government having taken possession of this quarry, the price the people now had to pay for metal at Mosgiel was practically the same as if they had to bring it all the way from Logan's Quarry, nearly twenty miles away.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON was sorry to say that he did not see his way to give the honourable gentleman the answer he wished for. railway required a large amount of ballast; the Government had become possessed of this quarry, and they must conserve the supply for

their own use.

Mr. FULTON said there was no other quarry from which the public could get a supply.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said that of course, if there was any serious difficulty caused in the district by the action of the Government, they should be very glad to consider the question.

### FLOODS.

Mr. DUNCAN asked the Premier, If he will, during the recess, prepare a Public Works Act Amending Bill containing clauses to meet the difficulties that at present exist in regard to farmers protecting themselves from damage by Enormous damage was periodically floods? done in the destruction of grain by the over-

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flowing of creeks, and at the present time the law was in such a state that a man was not in a position to protect himself from this. He hoped the Government would see their way, by putting a clause in the Public Works Act, to remedy this.

Mr. STOUT replied that the Government recognized the necessity of something being done to prevent the overflow of creeks and large streams; and during the recess the Government would consider how this could best be set about. He knew that in the honourable gentleman's district a great deal of damage had been sustained, and that the County Council refused to do anything, while private individuals were unable to protect themselves.

#### BULLER CROWN LANDS.

Mr. O'CONOR asked the Premier, Whether the Government is aware that a large area of Crown lands northward of the Karamea River, in the Buller County, has been omitted from valuation, and, in consequence, that the county named has been deprived of revenue under "The Crown and Native Lands Rating Act, 1882;" and also whether the Government will remedy the omission, and refund the rates uppend and accraning upon the said the rates unpaid and accruing upon the said Crown lands? An oversight or blunder had occurred that had deprived the Buller County Council of a considerable portion of their revenue; and he thought justice ought to be done, as the Council was struggling under difficulties to provide roads over a large district, and it was unfair that it should be deprived of its revenues.

Mr. STOUT replied that it was true that some Crown lands had been exempted from valuation. This was apparently done by mistake of the County Clerk, who was appointed valuer, and the Commissioner of Crown Lands had also overlooked it. The error would be rectified, and the county would not suffer.

#### ROUNDHILL RAILWAY-SIDING.

Mr. GILLIES asked the Government, If they will cause a railway-siding to be provided for the accommodation of the settlers round about the Roundhill District, on the Tuapeka line? He wished to express his regret at being forced to put such a question on the Order Paper. It was to be regretted that members should be compelled to occupy the time of the House in asking questions of this sort; but when he informed the House that since he came up, two months ago, he had been endeavouring to get from the Public Works Department the information which was here asked for, and had up to this moment failed, he thought honeurable members would at once see that he was justified even in taking up their

time in asking such a question as this.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON did not know what the honourable member meant at all. If the honourable member came to him and asked for information, he would give it at once, or at all events procure it. Precisely the same question was asked him some time ago by the honourable member for Tuapeka, and the answer he

gave then was the one he would give now. At the particular locality to which this question referred the gradients were so steep that it was not safe to put a siding there. The lives of the public must be considered, and it was not safe to put a siding there.

Mr. BROWN was not aware of having put the same question. He had called upon the head of the department, Mr. Maxwell, jointly with the honourable member for Bruce, and he received a letter from the Minister for Public Works on the subject, which he at once handed over to the honourable member for Bruce.

Mr. GILLIES explained that it was not in reference to the Minister for Public Works that he complained so much as with reference to the department. He had often heard it said that it was almost impossible to get an answer from the Public Works Department. He was quite content to be told that the work was not to be done. If that were the case, his time would be saved; but it was too bad to be kept trotting down to that big building day after day in regard to a simple matter of this kind, even after waiting on a Minister, and then to find that a reply had been given in writing more than a week ago to another member altogether. That state of matters showed to him that the department was not in a right state. With regard to the merits of the question itself, he had to say that this particular district was sadly in need of a railway-siding. He had always understood that the railways existed for the convenience of the country settlers, and to get produce to market cheaply. But, simply because it was not very convenient for the department that a siding should be made in this neighbourhood, therefore no siding whatever was to be made, or, at any rate, no answer was given to him. This particular siding was greatly needed. It would be a convenience to a great many settlers in that district, which was a very poor one, and he thought some consideration should be given, not only to those settlers, but to those in the district represented by the honourable member for Tuapeka.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON could not allow the statements of the honourable member to pass without saying a word or two. When he was previously Minister for Public Works there was a rule strictly in force that members of the House should communicate with the department only through the Minister. Now, he had found, since he resumed office the other day, that this rule had been departed from altogether. In the Public Works Department there were practically four permanent heads; and he found that members had got accustomed—he did not say so offensively—to communicate with all four heads of the department, and it was only when a member got an answer that he deemed unsatisfactory that the member came to the Minister to complain, and thus the Minister knew what was going He hoped honourable members would agree with him when he said that it would be much more in the interests of public business if, in future, this practice were somewhat curtailed.

Mr. E. Richardson

Mr. GILLIES moved the adjournment of the House. He wished to point out that in this particular case he had gone to the Minister, so that he had observed the rule referred to by the

honourable gentleman.

Mr. WAKEFIELD entirely approved of the rule laid down by the Minister for Public Works; and, for his own part, he would not dream of going to the departmental officers before speaking to the Minister. But he would like to say that his experience was that it was not of the slightest use to go to the Minister for Public Works. He had himself brought up questions of a character similar to this, requiring some immediate roply. He had written to the Minister for Public Works and drawn his attention personally to the matter, and yet he had not even got an acknowledgment of his letter. Now, every honourable member knew that he was continually pressed by his constituents or by the public to get information about particular matters, and, if he could get even an unfavourable reply, he could forward that, and so show that he had not neglected the thing. They did not expect to have every request acceded to; but, at all events, it was a matter of ordinary courtesy to answer a member's letter and tell him whether a thing could be done or not; and, if not, why not. Then the member could acquit himself to his correspondents. But he (Mr. Wakefield) must say that he thought honourable members were justified, when they could not get any answer at all from the Minister, in going to some businesslike and prompt officer of the department and saying to him, "For goodness' sake, get this matter settled for me, in order that I may answer my letters." He had never been able to get any answer from the Public Works Minister to any application he made. He had never gone to any official of the department; but one was very much tempted to do so when he could not get an answer, and when he was constantly reminded of matters by letter and telegram, and the persons sending them could not understand why they got no answers to their applications.

Mr. SEDDON thought the honourable member for Selwyn was rather harsh with regard to the Minister for Public Works.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I did not refer to the

present Minister particularly.

Mr. SEDDON said that, if the honourable member for Selwyn had stated that he did not refer to the present Minister for Public Works, he (Mr. Seddon) should not have got up in his place to say a word. The Minister for Public Works had only been six weeks in office, and there were something like one hundred and forty legislators in New Zealand, and whenever he (Mr. Seddon) went to see the Minister he was told there were four or five deep waiting to see him. Then, there were four departmental heads to whom the Minister had to refer matters, and they had to send to other parts of the colony for information. He did not think that the remarks made by the honourable member for Selwyn would apply to the present Minister: his experience of the Minister was that he was very prompt in answering. Although on many occasions he did not like the answers which were given to him, still he could not complain of their not being prompt and to the point. Seeing the remarks of the honourable member for Selwyn did not apply to the present Minister for Public Works, he (Mr. Seddon) had nothing more to say.

Mr. JOYCE might say, in reference to what had fallen from the Minister for Public Works, that for some time past the impression on his mind was that, in matters of detail, honourable members went to the heads of the department to avoid giving the Minister needless trouble and vexatious annoyance. He now learned differently; but, in adopting the plan spoken of by the Minister for Public Works, Ministers would bring upon themselves an amount of worry and trouble of which they had very little conception. Every honourable member must know that on scores of matters he had gone to the department instead of to the Minister direct, not deeming them of sufficient im-portance to trouble the Minister. He did not think that, on such a small matter as a siding, an honourable member should go to the Minister for Public Works.

Captain RUSSELL quite agreed with what had fallen from the honourable member for Awarua. He thought it was the duty of Under-Secretaries to protect Ministers as much as possible from being inundated by applicants with reference to small matters of detail. He was sorry to say that the House had got into a very bad practice of late—that of debating subjects which were put on the Order Paper in the form of questions. This happened almost every day, because honourable members knew that they would have no change of having the subject discussed by giving notice of motion. It seemed to him that this was a question of no confidence in the Minister for Public Works and in the department administered by that honourable gentleman; and, if he was of a particularly sensitive nature, he would request an adjournment of the House and immediately retire from office. They would then have to look about for another Minister. He (Captain Russell) did not know that it would not be a good thing to turn them all out, but he objected to Ministers being individualized in expressions of no confidence.

Motion withdrawn.

#### MAHURANGI LIME.

Mr. T. THOMPSON asked the Minister for Public Works, If the Government intend to give effect to the recommendation of the Public petitions Committee on the petition of J. Wilson and Co., of Auckland, re Mahurangi hydraulic lime?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the prayer of the petition in this case was that a bonus of £2,000 should be given. The Public Works Department was perfectly satisfied that the lime was good, and would use it, if practicable; but the Government were not prepared to consider the question of a bonus, because several Works, If the Ashley Railway-station return

other firms in different parts of the colon would be equally entitled to bonuses.

KAITANGATA AND TUAKITOTO LAKES. Mr. GILLIES asked the Government, If they will take steps to remedy the serious damage caused to settlers along the Kaitangata and Tuakitoto Lakes by the flooding of those lakes in wet weather, and by the overflow of the Clutha River when it is flooded by snow water; or, if not, will they bring in a Bill next session vesting these lakes, and adjoining unsold Crown lands, in the County Council of Bruce, so as to enable the local authorities to

deal with these evils themselves?

Mr. BALLANCE might say that the Government did not recognize any responsibility in the matter. A survey had been made of the lake, and the general results had worked out as follows: For an expenditure of £7,000 on a large relief-channel, with flood-gates, an area of something over four thousand acres of private lands would be improved in value to the extent of about £4,000; and also that an area of about one thousand five hundred acres of Crown lands would be reclaimed, and that area was estimated, if so reclaimed, to be worth about £6,000: total estimated benefits, say, £10,000. He might say, in regard to the question of vesting those lakes in the County Council, that was a subject which the Government would take into consideration as soon as possible after the session. It would be impossible to do so now, but during the recess they would give it full consideration, and would be prepared to recommend some course to be taken next session.

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Mr. MACARTHUR asked the Government, Whether they will, next session, bring in a Bill to reform the constitution of the Legislative Council in such a manner as to limit the time for which a member of that House shall hold

Mr. STOUT said the Government recognized the importance of this question, and, judging from the way in which the question was put, the honourable gentleman seemed to believe that a reform of the Legislative Council was desirable. The Government agreed that perhaps something should be done in this direction. The matter would receive consideration during the recess.

#### PEMBROKE TELEPHONE.

Mr. FERGUS asked the Commissioner of Telegraphs, Whether he will cause the tele-phone line to be extended from Pembroke to Hawea Flat and Cardrona?

Mr. STOUT replied that the cost would be

altogether out of proportion to the revenue derived. Therefore the Government could not see their way to agree to the suggestion of the honourable member.

ASHLEY RAILWAY-STATION.

Mr. PEARSON asked the Minister for Public

of goods and passengers is not sufficient to justify him in placing a person in charge of that station?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said he had examined the matter carefully, and could not see his way to comply with the request.

# AUCKLAND-TARANAKI RAILWAY.

Mr. SAMUEL asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether, in the event of the central route for the North Island Main Trunk Railway being adopted, the Government will undertake to cause, during the recess, a complete survey to be made of the best line to connect Auckland with Taranaki by means of a branch railway from the central line? The importance of connection between Auckland and Taranaki was recognized in the House, and certainly throughout the two provincial dis-tricts. This question had also a great deal of importance with reference to the debate at present pending in the House, and especially considering the preponderance of South Island members in the Ministry; and he trusted the reply given to it by the Minister for Public Works would be a distinct, clear, and definite one, such as would leave no doubt on the minds of honourable members in proceeding with that debate.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said he was not going to enter into any debatable question now. In reply to the question, he had to state that probably this afternoon a decision would be come to in reference to the route of the North Island Trunk Railway, and, if that decision was in the direction in which he expected it would be, then, when this line was undertaken and in course of construction, it was his desire and intention to have a survey made of a line in the direction indicated by the honourable

gentleman.

TORPEDO BOAT FOR THE BLUFF.

Mr. JOYCE asked the Minister of Defence, Whether he is aware that the Bluff was recognized by the Direct Steam Service Committee of 1882 as one of the chief ports of the colony; and, if so, will he, at the earliest possible moment, obtain a torpedo boat to be stationed there? He understood it was the intention of the Government to provide a torpedo boat for each of what were called the four great ports of the colony. He felt that the Bluff ought to be recognized in the same manner, as one which was entitled to the protection afforded by a torpedo boat.

Mr. BALLANCE might say that the Government was aware that the Bluff was recognized by the Direct Steam Service Committee as one of the chief ports of the colony; but it was not the intention of the Government at the prehonourable gentleman was perhaps aware that the Imperial Government had lately expressed an intention of making a contribution to the defence of Australia. He presumed New Zealand was also included in that proposition. It was the intention of the Government to consider the whole subject of defence during the

Mr. Pearson

recess, in connection with the proposal which the Imperial Government had made on the

subject.

Mr. DARGAVILLE wished to know whether the Government had any specific information, further than what appeared in the telegrams published in the papers, confirming the statement that the Imperial Government were going to expend the sum mentioned; because he and others were under the impression that the statement was a mistake, as such a course as it would seem to indicate was entirely at variance with the policy pursued by the Imperial Government towards the colonies.

Mr. BALLANCE said the Government had no direct information on the subject, and had accepted the statement in the papers to be

correct as far as it went.

# ADDINGTON WORKSHOPS.

Mr. W. WHITE asked the Minister for Public Works, If it is true that the Government have given notice of dismissal to a large number of workmen from the Addington Workshops? He had received a telegram stating that a number of the best workmen, who had been for a long time in the employment of the Government, had received one week's notice of dismissal; and, seeing that it was only the other day that the Government had to find work for a considerable number of unemployed, he hoped the Minister for Public Works would give an explanation of the action taken by the department in this instance.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said that, when he received notice of this question, he at the same time received a telegram from Mr. Holmes, the member for Christchurch South, and he put himself in communication with the department down there in order to ascertain the facts of the case. It appeared that a considerable amount of work had been completed, and that, consequently, twenty-seven employes had received notice. Some of these men had been employed for a few months, some since 1881, some since 1882, and some since 1883. He could not tell the honourable gentleman anything about the relative merits of these particular workmen, but he perceived that they were men of various trades, and labourers also. He should be glad to put the return in the honourable gentleman's hands for inspection.

#### MR. GISBORNE'S BOOK ON NEW ZEA-LAND.

Mr. BROWN asked the Premier, If any arrangement has been made with Mr. W. Gisborne, formerly a member of this House, to write a book on New Zealand; and, if so, what is the character of the work, the terms of payment, whether annually or otherwise, the amount already paid or now due for such services; also if any advance- or proof-sheets have come to hand, how much of the book remains incompleted, when it is likely to be finished, what its probable cost may be; and by whose authority such agreement, with the date thereof, was entered into, and out of what vote is the money paid or to be paid?

book to which this question referred, which he had only got a sight of that morning, was simply one mass of figures and extracts from departmental reports. Instead of being a readable book, which would interest people to look

over it, it was the very opposite.

Mr. ROLLESTON could not agree with the honourable gentleman, who was introducing

debatable matter.

Mr. BROWN could only repeat that the book was full of figures taken from documents laid upon the table. If a large sum of money was going to be spent on a work of this kind, it was a question whether the Government ought to allow the other part of the work to be published. He held in his hand a handbook of last year by Dr. Hector, which was more suitable, and would no doubt answer the purpose much better.

Mr. BALLANCE might say that the whole information on this question had been laid on the table during the present session, in the correspondence of the Agent-General (D.-2 and D.-3). The Agent-General had paid for the work -up to the 29th September, 1883—£250, and he understood that was the whole of the money that gentleman had contracted to pay for the work. The Agent-General, in the correspondence, stated,-

"This must be deemed to be in the nature of an honorarium rather than a payment, for it could not be called adequate remuneration for the labour which was required, and which has much exceeded what I thought when I first asked him to give me his assistance in bring-

ing the handbook out."

Parts I. and II. had reached the colony, and art III. was in course of preparation. With Part III. was in course of preparation. regard to the nature of the work itself, he had not studied it very closely, but, from what he had read of it, he was of opinion that it was a very valuable one. There was no doubt that it was full of figures; but they seemed to be re-markably well arranged, and to be accurate as far as they went. He did not know what the work would be when it was completed; but, judging from the first two parts, it was likely to be very valuable, and was very cheap at the price.

# NORTH ISLAND TRUNK RAILWAY.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Mr. SAMUEL.—Sir, I feel that I shall have some difficulty in addressing the House, owing to what has taken place this afternoon. In the first place, I quite recognize the desire which exists amongst honourable members that this debate should be as short as poswhich has been given to the question put by myself to the Minister for Public Works has been of such a nature as to leave me in doubt as to the position taken up by the Government on what I consider a very important point. The Minister for Public Works has said that he will cause a survey to be made of the line to connect Auckland with Taranaki during the construction of the central line, supposing the line is adopted; but he has refused to say whether

a survey will be made during the recess. The honourable gentleman is, I believe—unfortunately for the North Island—very little acquainted with the North Island, and very little acquainted with the particular district which this line will so immediately affect. I do trust that during the recess the honourable gentle-man and the Hon. the Premier will become better acquainted with the North Island, the affairs of which they will have to administer, and will more fully appreciate the great richness of that Island, and its great importance to the colony at large. Whilst I never occupy very much of the time of the House, and never address it unless I feel that I am bound to do so, I feel that I must say a few words respect-ing the merits of the Stratford route. I shall not imitate the conduct of the honourable member for Thorndon. I shall not decry the merits of the Marton route. I do not deny that the construction of a line by that route would of great advantage to the colony, and I will not deny that there is good land to be opened up by that line; but I feel that I should say a few words as to the advantage of opening up the country from Stratford by making a line from Te Awamutu to that place. There is in existence a report, which is mentioned in the minutes of evidence taken by the Committee which sat upon this subject, but which did not accompany the report of the Committee, and which, I think, has not been read by many members of the House, for that reason. I refer to the report of Mr. Morgan Carkeek, which was laid on the table of the House in pursuance of a motion moved by myself. That report sets forth very shortly the nature of the country between Te Awamutu and Stratford. Mr. Carkeek is not a Taranaki man; he is a Wellington man; and, if he were inclined to show any strong bias in the matter, that bias would be in favour of the Marton route. Mr. Carkeek's report is dated the 27th July last, and in it he says,-

"In reply to your telegram of the 25th instant, I have the honour to inform you that the country between Stratford and the depot on the Makuri River consists of good undu-lating bush land, well watered by the Patea River and its tributaries: the bush contains plenty of rimu and kahikatea timber, of good sawing quality. From the Makuri to the Mangaotuku the soil is poor, and the country for a short distance is rather rough, being a narrow steep range about 500ft. high. The Mangaotuku Valley, for the next seven or eight miles, consists partly of light bush and partly of open fern clearings, of light but good soil; the flats, although narrow, are surrounded by low hills about 300ft. high, with easy side slopes, covered with tawa and other light bush, easily cleared. For some distance now, the valley is covered alternately with kahikatea bush and swampy patches of scrub; the hills on both sides being still low, and covered with light bush and scrub. The valley gradually closes in and becomes, near the source of the stream, a mere swampy gully; the hills also increase in height from 300ft. to about

600ft., with steep side-slopes; so that here the dividing range between the Mangaotuku and Makahu is a succession of razor-back ridges, covered with black-birch. Crossing by a low pass to the Makahu the country improves, and continues good for some miles down the Makahu, and up the Pohukura; the flats, although narrow, are covered with bush, which contains plenty of kahikatea and some rimu fit for sawing; the soil is good. Towards the head of the Pohukura the country becomes rough, with high bush ranges on both sides, with steep side slopes and gullies, ending in papa-rock cliffs. This country continues for some miles to the Wangamomona River, a branch of the Wanga-Wangamomona River, a branch of the Wangamoni, when the country again improves. The Wangamomona Valley is narrow; the soil is good on the flats, covered partly by manuka and other scrub, and partly by bush, which contains good rimu, fit for sawing. From the head of the Wangamomona to Tahoraparoa the country is headen consisting of levy bills. the country is broken, consisting of low hills, covered with tawa and other light bush, and in some parts manuka and other scrub; the soil is not good. From Tahoraparoa to the Tangarakau the soil is bad, and the country rough, consisting of razor-back black-birch ranges, divided by narrow deep gullies, with steep sides and papa-rock cliffs. The country continues bad up the Tangarakau River: coal is, however, plentiful here, and similar to that now being obtained at Mokau. Leaving the Tangarakau, and crossing over to the Eao, the country improves, and continues good up the Ohura River; but of this portion of the country you have a full report by Mr. A. Rawson."

Now, I do not intend to proceed further on this part of the question than the reading of this report, which has not been brought prominently before honourable members; but I wish to draw their special attention to this fact: that the hills in this part of the country which have been so much commented upon -vary from 300ft. to 600ft. in height only. I would ask the honourable member for Thorndon to consider the height of the hills in the immediate neighbourhood of Wellington, scarcely one of which is less than 600ft. in height; and one of them, Mount Kaka, reaches a height of 1,466ft., as shown by the Surveyor-General's report. When we hear of the country between Te Awamutu and Stratford being a hilly and broken country, honourable members will recollect that the height of the highest hills there seldom or never exceeds 600ft., although there are certainly a few higher than that; but none of them are so high as the one I have mentioned close to Wellington. Sir, the opposition which has been shown by honourable members who represent Wellington constituencies is very easily to be understood. The opposition which may be shown by those who represent Hawke's Bay is quite a different thing; it is more becoming of them, and more worthy, than that of the Wellington members. The interest of the Wellington members is to prevent Taranaki from being united with Auckland: the interest of the Hawke's Bay members is a perfectly legitimate one—to obtain union

with Auckland. The one is to prevent Tara-naki from having access to its natural and proper market, Auckland; the other is to obtain access to Auckland, and, by forming the Marton line, to obtain that access the more easily. I do not think it will be necessary for me to answer some of the remarks made by the honourable member for Thorndon, because the motives which prompted him in making those remarks are so apparent. His arguments were so weak that I do not think I need take up the time of the House in replying to them. Following as I do honourable gentlemen who have spoken upon the same side as I do coming as I do from a district which will be materially benefited by the adoption of the Stratford route—I do not think that anything I can say in favour of that route will have very great weight with the House, and therefore I do not intend to prolong the debate. I believe the construction of a railway by the Stratford route would be the means of opening up better country, if not more of it—there would not be more of it, because the line would be much shorter-than would be opened up by adopting the central route. After reading and carefully considering the evidence before the Committee, I fail to see how that report has been arrived at. I completely agree with the honourable member for Akaroa. His statement to the House was so full, so explicit, and dwelt so fully upon those points that I should otherwise have alluded to, that my task is made a comparatively light one. I feel, however, that I should not be doing my duty were I not emphatically to assert that the Taranaki District is one which is capable of supporting a very large population. The honourable member for Thorndon and one or two honourable gentlemen - the Premier, I am sorry to say, included—alluded to the smallness of the population there as a reason why it should not be attended to and money not spent in opening up communication with it. I think they have overlooked one fact-namely, that the smallness of the population is not to be considered so much as the capacity of the district to support a large population. The more disproportionate the population to the number that the country is calculated and able to support, the more necessity there is for giving railway com-munication to it and affording facility for the settlement of that district with such a popula-tion as it may be able to support. Therefore tion as it may be able to support. Therefore the fact that the Taranaki District is thinly populated in proportion to its size, and to its capacity to support a large population, is one of the strongest arguments that can be used in favour of opening it up and connecting it with large centres and with markets, and so enabling it to be populated with such a number of people as it can well support. I was sorry to hear the Hon. the Premier make one or two statements respecting Taranaki which I certainly never expected to hear fall from him. Had the honourable gentleman occupied the position of a private member of this House his remarks would have been less noticed; but any remarks coming from one

Mr. Samuel

occupying his position should be the outcome of careful thought and reflection, and be given as calm, impartial criticism, rather than as arguments with the view of producing a result -securing a vote one way or the other. was certainly sorry to hear him allude to Taranaki as having in the past had lavished upon it public money very disproportionate to its size or to its population. These are statements which, I regret to say, have been very frequently made in this House. As one of the three members representing Taranaki in a House consisting of ninety-five members, I feel that I should not be doing justice to the district I represent if I did not allude to such statements. What has been the public money spent in the District of Taranaki so disproportionate to its size and population, which I have already said is small? We will begin with the Constabulary. It is not fair, it is not honest, to charge the expenditure in protecting this colony from Native difficulties, keeping the country quiet, and pacifying the Natives, to one particular district. That was an expenditure for the benefit of the whole colony, and it is not fair to charge that against any one particular district. Taranaki has, from its first settlement, been unfortunate. Being the hotbed of Native difficulties, its progress has been retarded; settlement has been completely stopped; and the settlers who remained there, true to their British pluck, unwilling to abandon the soil which they had settled upon, were continually being harassed by the Natives, constantly obliged to take up arms in defence of their hearths, constantly forced by the Government, when they would have willingly stayed and protected themselves, to abandon their homesteads and to come into the town, and have frequently been ruined; and consequently the district has been kept back. The statement that a great deal of money has had to be expended in maintaining the Constabulary and an armed force in that district-

Mr. STOUT.—I did not refer to the war expenditure at all. I referred entirely to the harbour and public works expenditure.

Mr. SAMUEL.—I am very glad to know that the Premier is not with those who constantly throw up against Taranaki the assertion that it has benefited by the war expenditure. Then, as regards public works expenditure: When the honourable gentleman comes to visit that district, as I hope he will soon do, he will find that our public works are very far inferior to those in any other part of the colony, or, at any rate, to those in any part of the South Island. He will find that our railways have been constructed in a manner which is cheap, if not niggardly. He will find that the railway carriages are far inferior to those in the South, and that in every respect our public works have been very economically constructed. gards the breakwater, there is a very distinct notion that the £200,000 raised by way of loan was obtained not in the same way and upon the same terms as those upon which other loans for similar works are to be raised under Bills

which have passed this House this session, and which it has given me great pleasure to vote for, but that the money has been given by the colony in some way. That is not so at all. The only special advantage that Taranaki has enjoyed is in respect of the 25 per cent. of the Land Fund. That is the only advantage that has been received; and under that, up to the present date, all that has been received is about £94,000. And, with respect to this Land Fund, I would call honourable members' attention to this fact: that Taranaki, up to the abolition of the provinces, had virtually no land revenue. When all the other provinces of New Zealand were obtaining the benefit of their land revenue, Taranaki had none. The land was there, and good land it is, and if the people of Taranaki could have taken advantage of it there would have been no necessity to ask for anything from the colony; the district would have been quite independent of any such concession as the House awarded, and I must say generously awarded, to it. But the land was given away to military settlers for nothing, and these persons unfortunately proved but poor settlers in most instances. Moreover, they were obliged to leave their holdings on account of the Native disturbances to which I have already alluded. Let honourable members who from Otago and Canterbury, and even from Wellington, consider what would have been the position of their districts if they had been deprived of their Land Fund, and had to contend with the difficulties that have beset Taranaki from the outset. They would not now feel that it was a very large thing to do for Taranaki, to help it to form a harbour which not only supplies local wants, but will be a harbour of refuge for that coast, especially when the help given was of so slight a character. Surely the £94,000 which has been obtained is not a very large amount of money, and it must be remembered that the benefit of this work will extend throughout the whole district of Taranaki, to Patea, Hawera, and the Waimate Plains, and not be confined to New Plymouth. It would not be difficult to favourably compare this work with those that are going on or have been done in other places, and which are not always of a reproductive character; and I can-not see that Taranaki has been treated with exceptional favour. Take the case of this great central prison being erected in Wellington. That is a work which will cost £82,000, I believe. That expenditure will not be reproductive in any sense, and I, for one, am very sorry that such a work was ever authorized. Then, there is being erected in the city from which the Premier comes a railway-station which, I understand, will cost about a quarter of a million of money.

Mr. STOUT .- No.

Mr. SAMUEL.—The Premier says "No;" but I have made inquiries of those acquainted with the subject, and I have been informed that the cost will be from £225,000 to £250,000: but I shall be very glad to hear that my information is not correct. That, also, is an unproductive work. No doubt it may, to a certain extent,

be warranted by the population of Dunedin; but I say that, in the interests of the colony, it is too large an amount—too extravagantly large an amount—to be spent in such a work, and that the Premier, coming from Dunedin, and with that building before his eyes, should have hesitated before he made statements as to a disproportionate amount of expenditure in Taranaki. Then, we find that there have been erected at Oamaru a new post-office, custom-house, and Supreme Courthouse; and there have been erected in Dunedin large public buildings, which the other day a member in another place, who is also a member of the pre-sent Government, said were put up to replace buildings which would have lasted for ten or twelve years without any inconvenience to the public. In Wellington, also, we have a post-office which cost over £30,000, and it has also been asserted by the same honourable gentleman that that "is a gigantic building, which is far too large for the trade of the place."

I could go on for hours enumerating instances of extravagant expenditure, which cannot benefit the colony as the Taranaki breakwater will do, but has been incurred simply owing to the continual demand from the large centres of population for the expenditure of public money — a demand which I consider should not be too complacently listened to by the House, and which I hope will not continue to be made so persistently in the future. There is no Supreme or Resident Magistrate's Courthouse in New Plymouth, the property of the Government; but an old wooden building is rented, and properly so too, while the Government is short of money for reproductive works. There is not a telephone within the whole District of Taranaki, and no large Government expenditure has taken place there, as some people seem to think; and I feel it to be my duty to say so, because I can do so without fear of contradiction. I do not propose to delay the House further. I recognize the expediency of closing this debate as quickly as possible. But I hope that honourable members, especially members from the South, will give their unbiassed attention not only to the report, but to the evidence which accompanies it. I look upon the evidence in favour of the Stratford route as being much stronger than that in favour of the central route, and I think if honourable members look at the evidence they will find it to be so; but, at the same time, I feel that, were I to deal with the different points on which I rely, the House would lose patience, and perhaps justly so, at this period of the session. This great public work has been put off so long that honourable members would feel weary and disgusted were I to enter into a critical examination of the evidence, although I am quite prepared to do so. I shall therefore only ex-press a hope that honourable members will give their attention to the evidence taken by the Committee-and I am bound to say here that the Committee undoubtedly gave great time and attention to the matter, and dis-cussed it in a proper spirit, for which I am

thankful, though I cannot agree with their decision—and if they do so I am satisfied that they will come to the conclusion that it is the Stratford line that is most likely to benefit the colony as a whole.

Mr. LARNACH.—The honourable gentleman who has just sat down seems to have forgotten what the question really was that was referred to the Committee to consider. Its duty was to find out which would be the best line in the interests of the colony, and I think it will be admitted that the Committee set to work in a practical way. In the first place they collected all the departmental evidence that it was possible to get in Wellington, beginning with that of Mr. McKerrow, the Surveyor-General. It is true that his evidence was only of a secondary character; but it was the best secondary evidence that could be obtained, because it was the result of a careful study of the reports sent in by subordinate surveyors. The Committee next took the evidence of Mr. Gill, head of the Native Land Purchase Department, the object being to find out which route would open up the greatest amount of Native land available for settlement, either land in the hands of the Natives or in process of being acquired by the Government. The Committee also took the evidence of Messrs. Blackett and Knorpp, who had either made or sketched plans and estimates, and whose evidence was therefore very valuable. Then, the Committee took the evidence of witnesses who had personal know-ledge of the country. Now, the object of the Committee, in the first place, was to find out which line would open up the greatest amount of country fitted for settlement, and be of most benefit to the colony. There can be no question, I think, that, when honourable members have read the evidence, the decision of the Committee will be upheld by the House. I cannot conceive that any gentleman would be biassed so far as to oppose the finding of the Committee after an impartial sifting of the evidence put before it. I was rather surprised at the statement of one honourable memberthe honourable member for Hawke's Bay, I think—that the report of the Committee was bald. I do not know what more was required, especially when there was attached to the report the whole of the evidence that had been taken. To my mind the report takes the best form possible, and there, with it, is the material by which it is backed up. I should be sorry to detain the House very long in connection with this matter; but I may say this: that I support the central line not on account of the interests of Auckland, Wellington, or Taranaki, but in the interests of the colony; and as a colonist and a mem-ber of the Committee I have taken considerable trouble in connection with the matter, and therefore I ask the House to bear with me while I briefly analyse some of the evidence given. The Committee examined thirty-four witnesses, and took all the evidence it was possible to take. In fact, any honourable gentle-man in the House had but to hint to any member of the Committee his desire for any

witness to be called, and his wish was at once attended to. The evidence of Mr. McKerrow went to support the central line, not only on account of the easy gradients, but on general grounds, based on information supplied by officers of the department as to the character of the line and of the country; and the Committee arrived at the conclusion that that gentleman's evidence was borne out by the subsequent evidence. The next witness was Mr. Gill, and his evidence was very important in respect to the figures he gave, and they are decisively in favour of the cen-tral line. They went to show that on the Marton-Waikato route there are 259,000 acres of land still under purchase by the Government; and the blocks of land purchased under the Public Works Act are nearly 326,000 acres, besides which there are 129,000 acres leased at a rental of £13 per 1,000 acres, that will be subsequently acquired. On the Stratford route there are only 134,000 acres purchased under the Public Works Act. The Committee were somewhat swayed in arriving at the decision they did by the fact that there was admittedly more land on the central route, and of better quality. The next witness who came upon the scene was Mr. Marchant, a surveyor, who told us that the central line would open up two million acres in the Provincial District of Wellington alone. Mr. Donald Fraser, a farmer, also favoured the central line, and he is a man who has lived some time in the district, and whose evidence, as a practical witness, was entitled to weight with the Committee. Then we had the evidence of Wahanui, the great chief. As far as I could gather, his evidence amounted to this: He did not much care for the central route, and I think, in his own interest, he perhaps favoured the Stratford line. But his evidence certainly pointed clearly to the fact that the central line would open up the greatest quantity of land, and was the most level. He also stated that on portions of the Stratford line, as far as he knew, there was perhaps more good land. We took that for what it was worth. I am sure that no honourable gentleman who has taken the pains to read the evidence of Mr. Rochfort can arrive at any other conclusion than that arrived at by the Committee. Mr. Rochfort told us that there was no doubt in his mind the gradients on the central line could be made so as not to exceed anywhere 1 in 70. That should at once have some weight with honoursble members, when it is remembered that this line passes through country which is acknowledged to be the best, and where the largest extent of country fitted for settlement will be opened up. The honourable member for New Plymouth referred to Mr. Carkeek's evidence. Now, Mr. Carkeek does not positively recommend the Stratford route as against the other. He spoke principally of the Stratford line, and his evidence did not recommend it as a proper line to make. From twenty-five miles to sixty miles he stated was worthless country; so that we can hardly say that Mr. Carkeek is in any way in favour of the Stratford line. Then, Mr.

Knorpp gave evidence in favour of the central line, and he had been a month there with Mr. Mitchelson. Mr. Knorpp's evidence is entirely in favour of the central line. I now come to Mr. Mitchelson's evidence; and I hope that honourable gentleman will give an expression of his views on the subject before the debate closes. Although he did not state that he was in favour of the central line, any one who reads his evidence must come to the conclusion that, although he is an Auckland man, yet in the interests of the country he is entirely in favour of the central line. Messrs. Holmes, Ross, and Carkeek may all be said to have spoken more about the Stratford line than the central line, and yet not one of those practical surveyors recommended it as a line to be made. Out of the thirty-four witnesses who gave evidence, I do not think that more than half a dozen spoke in reality in favour of the Stratford line; and the evidence of one of those gentlemen, Mr. Sheehan, is worthy of a few remarks from me. I was very much impressed with Mr. Sheehan's evidence when he first gave it, and I was inclined to conclude that we should be on the right track if we adopted the Stratford But it is a remarkable fact that that gentleman's evidence is not borne out by a single witness who followed him; and I was not long in arriving at the opinion that we ought not to set much value upon Mr. Sheehan's statements as good practical evidence. The honourable member for Auckland East, Sir George Grey, also gave evidence; and it is wonderful—and I am very happy to notice it—how excellently he remembered the nature of the country on the Stratford route, although the last occasion that he was there was nineteen years ago, and the previous occasion thirty-six years. He had traversed the country, in trying to find a road to New Plymouth from the north, and he spoke of it as being excessively broken. I was a little surprised, however, when I heard him, the other day, get up and recommend this line on account of the preferable country in its neighbourhood as compared with any other route, stating that he knew something of the other routes, whereas he stated positively to the Committee that the Stratford route was the only portion of the country he knew. Then, there is the evidence of another important witness-namely, Mr. Bryce, the late Native Minister. One cannot read his evidence without coming to the conclusion that in his opinion the central line is the proper one to make in the interests of the country. The late Premier, Major Atkinson, also gave evidence; but he told us plainly that he favoured the Stratford line, and I gathered, and so, I think, did other members of the Committee, that he did so in the interests of Taranaki. He admitted that he had not been much over the country and knew nothing of it, but he favoured the Stratford line exclusively, as I thought, in the interests of Taranaki. But we had a wider subject to deal with: we had to deal with the interests of the colony. It was not the interest of any member of the Committee to take the line far away 74

from Taranaki. The object of the Committee was to come to a finding, whether it was satisfactory to the House or not, which would be the best in the interests of the country; and that was what the Committee did. There that was what the Committee did. was another witness, Mr. Donkin, an expert, an excellent surveyor, who threw out an idea which I hope the Government will pay some attention to. It will be found in the following part of his evidence:-

"Which line, in your opinion, would open up the best country for settlement, and most of it?—Of course I could not give an opinion about the quality of the land on the southern part of the central line from Tamaranui.

"I understand you to say that, if the central line were made, the interest of the country would be better served by making a branch from Tamaranui to the west. Would that be better than making the Stratford line?—Looking to the future, I believe it would."

He was questioned on that point, and gave evidence to this effect: that the country was very easily traversed from New Plymouth to Tamaranui, which is about 160 miles from Marton, and the distance from New Plymouth to Tamaranui would be fifty or sixty miles. The opinion was shared in by several members of the Committee that, if the central line is made, the Government should lose no time in having a survey made of that proposed connection; and if any honourable member proposes a motion to that effect he shall have my support. Then, we have the evidence of Messrs. Humphries and Smith, who are Chief Surveyors in different parts of the colony; but they only spoke on the evidence of their subordinates, and knew nothing of the country themselves. The evidence of Captain Northcroft has been spoken of as advocating a certain route as the best; but there is nothing in his evidence to warrant such a statement. He knows nothing of the country at all. We examined the following departmental witnesses: Messrs. Gill, Blackett, Humphries, Marchant, and Smith; and, with the exception of two, the whole of them were in favour of the central line. examined the following experts, who had surveyed the country: Messrs. Rochfort, Carkeek, Holmes, and Sicely. Messrs. Sicely and Rochfort's statements were clearly in favour of the central line; and the other gentlemen spoke principally of the Stratford line only because they had no knowledge of the other, and neither of them recommended the Stratford route as possessing country fit for settlement. One surveyor went so far as to say that the country on the Stratford route was really the most broken and worthless country he had met with in the colony. Then, here is a noticeable fact: that, where the evidence points to good land being on the Stratford route, it is common to both lines, either the western or the central. We know that there is some good land about Stratford and Taranaki, but there are forty miles of country along that route which is really a terra incognita. Then, we have the evidence of Mr. Field, who speaks of the land suitable for settlement, and of the

value of the timber upon that land. He speaks of 100,000 to 150,000 acres of black maire timber being there, and goes on to give the following evidence:

"What sort of country is that?-From Murimotu and Wangaehu to Manganui-a-te-Ao it is principally level, rich country, beautifully

"What sort of timber is it, then?—Principally red-pine, rimu, totara, and maire. The

maire is very fine indeed.

"What proportion is there of maire?—In places it is two-thirds maire; it depends on the situation. The maire grows principally on the slopes of the hills, where there are hills, and is scattered about on the flats.

"How far does that extend, north and south and east and west?—I should say there is level

good land of 100,000 to 150,000 acres.

"Interspersed with maire?—It has maire

spread pretty nearly all over it.

"In speaking of the maire, you did not tell us what size the trees were?—You could get it any size you like-from 2ft. to 5ft. They run very large indeed. It is the finest maire I know of.

"What height is it?-30ft. or 40ft. in the

Honourable gentlemen will see at once that such timber is of vast importance, and, where you could get it 30ft. and 40ft. high, it could be spliced and jumped as they join timber for masts of ships, piles, and other useful purposes. I was very much struck with the evidence of Mr. Hursthouse, the surveyor. He gave his evidence in a very straightforward manner, and favoured the central line. One could not help being impressed with his statements. He spoke as though he understood the subject on which he was being questioned. Our object was to come to an impartial determination as to which line was the best to make, in the interests of the country, and we took a considerable amount of trouble to that end. That we may not have satisfied many honourable members I regret, but at the same time I feel sure that the majority of the House and the country will be with us in saying that we have acted rightly, and given a very fair and prudent judgment on the case submitted to us.

Mr. J. W. THOMSON.—I have only a word or two to say on this question. I think that the members from the Middle Island may be looked upon as occupying to some extent the position of a jury, in so far as this route is concerned. No doubt two or three members from the Middle Island have addressed themselves to this question; but they have been members of the Committee, so that they are quite en-titled to speak. I myself do not intend to speak on the merits of this question of route. I intend to satisfy myself by voting on the question, and I may say that I intend voting in favour of the central route. I rise simply to state that, although I intend voting in this direction, I do not consider that as an acknowledgment on my part that I am in favour of this work being proceeded with at present. Two years ago we passed an Act authorizing the

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Government to borrow a million for this work. | When this Loan Act was passed I looked upon the country as committed to the work, and by deciding this question of route the country may be said to be committed still further to the work. But in the Loan Act it is provided that the line should first of all be surveyed. Well, that will take a long time—I presume twelve months—but, in addition to that, I think some provision must be made for the settlement of the country. It is not for me to say in what way this is to be done. The Government may purchase the adjacent land from the Natives, or they may perhaps be able to make some arrangement with them by which they might get, say, alternate blocks on each side of the line. At all events, the country Some steps must be taken must be settled. by the Government towards the settlement of this country. I am sorry to see that the Minister for Public Works is not now present, because, in replying, he should take the opportunity of informing the House as to what the Government intend to do with regard to settling this part of the country through which the railway will go. We have heard a great deal in this House in time gone by are by this work to raise the value of the land; to give it an increment; to increase its value: and who is to reap the advantage of this increased value, or increment, as it is called? I say it is the State that is entitled to it, and it is the State that should get whatever increment there may be through the prosecution of this work. I do not think the settlement of this locality should be left in a great measure to chance. I do not think we should allow the Natives to sell it to this person and the other in tens of thousands of acres, as they are almost certain to do. I believe it is only the Government that can settle this land; and this is a matter we are all very much interested in. Unless this land is settled I do not see how the line can pay—it cannot possibly pay. It goes through what is, at the present time at all events, an entirely unsettled and almost unknown territory; and, unless it is settled its actual to the control of the with men and women, the line cannot possibly pay. And we must pay interest on the money. We are committed to an expenditure of one million on this line, and it will probably cost a great deal more than that—say, a million and a half, or at least £1,400,000. Well, if we and a half, or at least £1,400,000. borrow money at 4 per cent., it will cost us, at all events, say, £50,000 a year. Three-fifths of the population of New Zealand are located in the Middle Island, and two-fifths in the North Island; so that, if there is an expenditure of £50,000 in the shape of interest, it means that the Middle Island will have to contribute £30,000 of this, and the North Island £20,000. Although I am making these remarks, I do not wish to throw cold water on the work. I look upon the country as committed to the work; but it is one of those undertakings that I do not think there is any great need for hurry about. At all events, I shall be no party to voting for the borrowing of this money until

I am assured the Government have taken steps which will lead up to the permanent settlement of the country.

Mr. BUCHANAN.—In the few remarks I propose to make on this question I will endeavour to be as brief as possible. But, having thought it my duty, before being elected to this House, to give considerable prominence to the question of choice of route, or, rather, to that of going on immediately with the construction of this line, I deem it my duty to say a few words before the question goes to the vote. The honourable member for Clutha has touched upon several aspects of the question that I intended alluding to, so that, to a certain extent, it will be unnecessary for me to dwell upon those particular points. First, let us inquire whether there are any sound reasons for immediately proceeding with this work. Several speakers who have addressed themselves to the question have shown us very plainly that for some years we need not and cannot expect any large amount of traffic. They have shown by the traffic between Christchurch and Dunedin that, although the through line there connects large centres of population, the through traffic is very small indeed as to passengers, and the same result has also been found with regard to goods. A large population is also settled on the land through which the line passes from Christchurch to Dunedin. But in the case of the proposed trunk railway to Auckland we have no such population, and, even if the country alongside the line were now in the hands of the Government, ready to be sold, it is evident that it would take some years before any large population or produce would be available to provide traffic for the railway. One of the questions that closely affect the wisdom or otherwise of immediately opening a line like this is, whether the land can be at once ac-quired for settlement. We are all agreed it is of great importance to invite as large a population from outside as possible, and also to provide an investment for the accumulated earnings of our workmen throughout New Zealand. If it were proved that the lands in the hands of the Government were exhausted, if an immediate, or at all events closely immediate, necessity existed for providing more land, then I should say at once, let us proceed with this line. But let any one look over the "Crown Lands Guide," and he will see that there are very large blocks of land in various parts of New Zealand not yet settled, but which are waiting for population. I need not dwell upon this particular part of the question in the way of proving that it is so. I will only refer honourable members to the "Guide" itself. question has been put, I think, by the honourable member for Manawatu, asking the Government if they intend to open for sale large blocks of land which exist in that district. Well, that is another instance of what I find to. be the case in very many districts throughout the colony. These large blocks of land are in the hands of the Government, and railways are running through them in many cases, or in their immediate vicinity, and yet those rail-

ways are paying very small dividends. Yet, instead of settling those lands, and endeavour-ing to get a traffic for the railways which are now paying so badly, we are proposing to fritter away money in constructing this through line before we are ready for it. I am satisfied that, if the question is gone into from a busi-ness point of view—and the business point of view is one which New Zealand, in the present state of her finances, cannot afford to deal carelessly with—it will be found that the position I take up is unassailable, and that is that it would be to the interest of the colony, both North and South, to delay the construction of this railway for a couple of years longer. Another strong reason which I had for taking up this view during the elections was this: I held that, if the North Island showed a proper amount of self-denial in this direction, we could very fairly ask our brethren in the South to adopt a similar course. We have demands from the Otago District for the Otago Central Railway. I have a very considerable amount of sympathy with the demand for that line. A large amount of money has already been spent in the construction of what has not yet been turned to account. Therefore I think Otago is entitled to sufficient money to enable that line to be carried as far as the Upper Taieri. Similarly, with regard to Canterbury, we have just passed a Bill to authorize the construction of a railway that will give it com-munication with the West Coast. I opposed that Bill as strongly as I could, for I feel satis-fied that, instead of the contention of the Colonial Treasurer coming true—namely, that the colony would suffer no loss—it will be just the reverse. Clause 5 of that Bill will cause a very heavy tax to be put upon the colony, because the working expenses on the line will greatly exceed the receipts for many years to come. There have been other large expenditures proposed in the South Island, and I had hoped that the North Island members' agreeing to postpone the construction of this line for a couple of years could be used as a factor to persuade the South Island members to stay their hands and adopt the course of economy which was started in 1882, when it was determined that not more than a million a year should be expended on public works. But what has occurred since the commence-ment of this session has convinced me, and must convince every honourable member, that it is hopeless to expect any such thing. numerous proposals for fresh borrowing have taken the House off its legs; and now it has come to this: that it is simply a rush to see which district will get its hand most deeply into the money-box. I am sorry that it should be so; but that is exactly the position. The honourable member for Hawke's Bay called for a division the other evening on the question that this resolution should be postponed for six months; and that division showed most clearly the opinions of honourable mem-bers in this House: so that, as I said before, any hope I had of staying the hand of the House for a couple of years in the construction

North Island

of this line has been practically settled. I will now address myself more particularly to the question of route. The facts which have come out by means of the evidence given before the Committee have amply proved what I stated with regard to the central route before the beginning of this session. It has proved this: that, although there is a considerable quantity of good land from Te Awamutu southwards, there is a great area along the line of very in-different and poor land. I will take the evi-dence of one witness, Mr. Cussen, a surveyor, whose evidence is valuable as being that of a practical man resident in that part of the country for twelve months; and he tells us that from seventy to eighty miles south of Te Kuiti the quality of the land is very indifferent; that it is mostly pumice, with, in some places, dense bush. It has been stated by some of the witnesses that this bush land is of a very good quality indeed; but one thing that I cannot understand with regard to their evidence is that a good many of them state that rimu forms a large proportion of the timber. Now, during an experience of something like twenty years, I have never yet been able to see that rimu in large quantities is an indication of good land. My experience has invariably been that in such cases the land has been of poor quality. I think, therefore, that it is a matter for regret that the Government—I do not mean this Government, because they have not had time to make any examination, but I refer more particularly to the late Government — I say that it is a matter for regret that, although so many engineers have been through the country, they did not send two or three experts on the question of land to examine the quality of the soil. I am satisfied that it would have been of great value to the Committee in coming to a conclusion as to which route should be adopted if they had had more satisfactory evidence on this point. It is true that we have the evidence of some practical settlers, but they had not specially examined the land. They happened to be there on other business, and, in most cases, no doubt, they could not help having a locality bias: that is to say, the Taranaki witnesses would naturally favour the Stratford route, and the Auckland and Marton settlers would favour the central route. Therefore, as I have said, it is a matter for regret that the Government did not send two or three experts to report upon the question of the quality of the land. Now I should like to say a few words on the Native question. The honourable member for Clutha expressed a hope that the Government would say something on this point; and I certainly think that, in dealing with this question, they should have told us what they proposed to do in the event of the Natives refusing to cede any land for the line. I maintain that the Government would not be justified in constructing the line right through Native land without making that land chargeable for some of the cost. To me it seems monstrous that we should have to raise a million and a half to construct this line through Native land,

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and then afterwards have to purchase that land. In saying this, I do not wish it to be thought that I would vote for dealing with Native lands in any way different from what we should do if the land were in the hands of Europeans. On this question, when it does crop up, I shall take care to vote so that they shall be dealt fairly with in the mat-ter of the land; but I think this is one of the strongest points that have to be considered in connection with the construction of the line. However, having studied the evidence given before the Committee, and as it is evident that tne House is determined to have one line or the other made, I cannot help coming to the conclusion, in common, I believe, with a majority of the House, that the central route is which it is not necessary that I should go, my vote will go in that direction. One strong point which was made by some of the members from Taranaki was that they had a very large stock supply, which would go by rail to Auckland if the Stratford line were made. There can be no doubt that such would be the case for a time; but I think it would be found that, after the four or five years which it would take to construct the line, things would have changed: that is to say, Auckland would then be raising a much larger stock supply than she does at present, and consequently would need less from Taranaki; so that I think that argument will, to a great extent, fall to the

The House divided.

AYES, 53.

Allwright Joyce Ross Ballance Lake Russell Barron Lance Seddon Beetham Larnach Shephard Bruce Shrimsk Levestam Bryce Locke Smith Steward, W. J. Stewart, W. D. Buchanan Macarthur Buckland, J.C. McKenzie, J. Cadman McMillan Stout Coster Mitchelson Sutter Cowan O'Conor Thomson, J.W. Duncan Ormond Walker Fitzherbert White, W. Pearson Whyte, J. B. Fraser Pyke Fulton Reese Wilson.Grigg Richardson, E. Tellers. Richardson, G. Johnston Hatch Hursthouse Newman. Rolleston

Nozs, 20.

Bevan Hakuene
Brown Hobbs
Buckland, W.F. Menteath
Dargaville Moat
Gillies Montgomery
Grey Moss
Guinness Pere

Thompson, T.
Tole
Trimble.
Tellers.
Peacock
Samuel.

Taiaroa

PAIRS.

For. Against.
Fisher Atkinson
Fergus Hamlin
Garrick Dodson

Gore Holmes O'Callaghan. Hurst, W. J. Macandrew Morris.

Majority for, 83.

Amendment negatived.

On the question, That the report be agreed

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said,—I wish to say a few words in reply. I should not have thought it necessary to trouble the House with any remarks had it not been for some statements made by one or two honourable members. I will do them the justice to say this: that I give them credit for having made those remarks entirely from a want of knowledge of the real facts. The honourable member for Franklin North made a statement which I feel bound to notice. He stated that the Committee had "set themselves about" to please one section of this House. I think it very unfair that such a charge should be made against any Committee appointed by this House; and, asthe Chairman of the Committee, I am in duty bound to resent any such charge. The honourable member for Newton challenged the statement I made that the grades were heavy between Stratford and To Awamutu, and he asserted that there was only one grade of 1 in 50; whereas the fact is, there are eight grades of 1 in 50, which total up twenty-three miles of 1 in 50.

Mr. PEACOCK.—My remarks went to show that it was on the line already made between Stratford and Marton, and not on the new line, that the steeper grades were to be found, and on that portion of the line between Stratford and Te Awamutu the worst grade was 1 in 50.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON .- There are eight grades of 1 in 50, and there is abundance of evidence to show that this line would be constructed and worked at a large additional cost. Several honourable members have referred to the question of securing the Native lands. Chairman of the Committee I understood the feeling of the Committee to be to urge the Government to take steps in that direction. colleague the Native Minister has on the Order Paper a Bill-the Native Lands Settlement Bill—which will be proceeded with immediately, and which will provide for protecting the colony in the direction of securing the Native lands, so as to prevent any of the evils which honourable members have referred to. This measure will also provide for the settlement of this land after it has come into the possession of the Government. I will not detain the House longer, as the subject has been very fully discussed.

Motion agreed to.

PUBLIC WORKS STATEMENT.

(For all Tables and Returns referred to in this Statement, see Appendix D.-1.)

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—Mr. Speaker, the information usually contained in the Public Works Statement has been somewhat anticipated this year by the particulars laid upon the table of the House during the last short session. The time that has elapsed since the Govern-

ment took office has not been sufficient to enable me to make myself thoroughly acquainted with the proceedings of the various branches of the Public Works Department, and I have had to depend in a great measure upon the figures and reports submitted to me by the several official heads of the department.

I may state, however, that, so far as time has permitted, I have looked into the question of the staff of the department as provided for in the present estimates. Reductions were supposed to be made in the year 1881-82; but I find that those reductions were more nominal than real, and that the bulk of the officers who at that time disappeared from the list of the permanent staff were placed on temporary charge, and provided for out of the votes for construction works. Although I am not as yet prepared to state to what extent reductions can be made, I am of opinion that the staff is much larger than is necessary for the due supervision of the works the colony has now in hand.

The railways being the most important works carried on by the department, I propose to allude to them first, under the several headings of "Railways in Course of Construction," "Additions to Opened Railways," and "Working of Railways already opened for Traffic." Before going into the details of the several lines, however, it may be well to state that on the 31st March, 1884, the colony had 1,404 miles of railway open for traffic, on which there had been expended the sum of £11,251,633, and that there were 234 miles in course of construction.

It was to this 234 miles of unfinished railway that my honourable colleague the Colonial Treasurer principally alluded when he stated that it will be our endeavour to push on to a speedy completion the various unfinished portions of lines, so as to add this extra mileage to our revenue-producing railways.

RAILWAYS IN COURSE OF CONSTRUCTION.

I shall now shortly refer to those portions of our railways which were under construction during the past year.

Kawakawa. — This railway, about 7½ miles long, has at length been opened for traffic to deep water, with a convenient wharf, alongside of which is a depth of water of 21ft. at low-water spring-tides.

Whangarei-Kamo. — This has been opened for traffic for more than a year; and an increase of traffic may be expected, as the proprietors of the Whauwhau Mine have arranged for the construction of a branch line to their mine near Kamo, the yield from which is expected to be considerable.

Waikato-Thames.—The section of this line from Hamilton to Morrinsville, 18 miles, is now opened for traffic. The section beyond Morrinsville to Te Aroha, 12 miles, is being formed under contract, and the formation is nearly completed. The erection of the bridge and approaches over the Thames River, at the end of this contract, is being proceeded with, and, when complete, will be available for ordi-

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nary road traffic pending the completion of the railway.

Grahamstown-Kopu (41 miles).—The permanent-way on this line is now almost completed.

Hamilton-Cambridge Branch (12 miles).—
This line was opened for traffic on the 8th instant.

Napier-Woodville.—This line has been extended and opened for traffic to Matamau, 4 miles beyond Makatoko, to the great convenience of the travelling public, as about 9 miles of coaching is thus saved. A further portion, extending to Tahoraite, 7 miles, will, it is expected, be ready for public traffic by the end of this month. This will bring the railway to a point 81 miles from Napier.

Wellington-Woodville.—The extension of the railway beyond Masterton is progressing under two contracts for a distance of about 17 miles.

Foxton-New Plymouth.—A further length of about 17 miles on this line has been opened for public traffic during the year—namely, from Waverley to Manutahi—leaving a gap of only 10 miles between the latter place and Hawera to complete the through connection. The work on this gap is proceeding as fast as the weather will allow, and, under favourable circumstances, this length might be ready for traffic about the end of February next.

Nelson-Roundell.—This line has been completed from Nelson to Belgrove, 23 miles, for some time, and the only extension now in progress is the Wai-iti section, 2½ miles, the formation of which is well advanced.

Greymouth-Nelson Creek.—A length of 60 chains of heavy formation-work beyond Brunnerton has been completed on this railway for some time past, but no further extensions of it are at present in hand.

Greymouth - Hokitika. — On this railway a total length of 10 miles of formation is partly executed: 6 miles at the Greymouth end, and 4 miles at the Hokitika end. The work done during the year has consisted of a small formation-section at the Hokitika end, for which sleepers have also been provided.

Picton-Awatere.—On this railway a length of 4½ miles to the southwards of Blenheim, known as the Vernon section, has been formed for some time. No further work was done during the financial year, but a contract was on the 9th July this year let for 3½ miles of formation from the end of the Vernon section towards the Dashwood Pass.

Hurunui-Waitaki and Branches Railway.

Hurunui-Waitaki. — The extension northwards from Waikari to the Hurunui is now finished and ready for opening. This completes the main trunk railway throughout Canterbury and Otago.

The bed of the Hurunui River having been found too hard for pile-driving, the exection of a pile-bridge there has been suspended, and a contract for its completion with iron cylinders, instead of piles, is now in preparation.

The formation, bridges, and station-buildings on the section between the Hurunui River and the crossing of the main road near the Red Post is in progress. This will bring the railway to a central position, 69 miles from Christchurch, commanding the traffic of the Amuri and Hanmer Plains.

The Ashburton Branch Railway has been finished and opened to a point opposite Mount Somers Township, 21 miles from the point where it leaves the main line, and 23 miles

from Ashburton.

1884.7

The Little River Branch has been opened for some time to Birdling's Flat, a point about 30 miles from Christchurch. Beyond this point the formation is finished for a distance of 11 miles, and another section of 1 mile is in progress under contract. In addition to this, also, a further short length of formation has been undertaken by day labour, to give work to the unemployed in Christchurch.

The Albury Branch Railway has been completed and opened for traffic to Fairlie Creek namely, to a point 36 miles from where it leaves the main line, and 39 miles from

Oxford-Malvern.-This section, which connects the Malvern Coal Field with North Canterbury, has been finished.

## Waitaki-Bluff and Branches Railway.

On the Heriotburn Branch Line a further extension from Kelso to Heriot has been opened, thus completing a total length of 20 miles from Waipahi, on the main line.

On the Livingstone Branch the formation works, with the exception of the tunnels, have been completed for some years, and during last year a further portion of the tunnelling has

been in progress.

Of the Palmerston Branch a length of about 2 miles is completed for traffic, but is at present only used for bringing ballast to the main line. The remaining 8 miles, to Waihemo, is ready for platelaying

Of the Catlin's River Branch, between the main line and the Port Molyneux Road, distance in all about 8 miles, about 51 miles is formed ready for platelaying, leaving about 21

miles still to be formed.

On the Edendale-Toitois Branch a distance of 4 miles from Edendale to Wyndham has been open for traffic for some time, and a further distance of about 4 miles is ready for platelaying.

On the Waimea-Switzers Branch the formation is partly completed for a distance of about

7 miles from Riversdale.

On the Seaward Bush Branch the formation is completed for a length of about 3 miles, and a further length of about 2½ miles is in progress.

## Otago Central Railway.

Otago Central.—The works in progress on this line extend over a distance of 32 miles. The formation of the Wingatui section is finished ready for the rails, and a small quantity of work was done on the Hindon section during the early part of the year by the unem-

The Deep Stream Contract, let in February, 1882, was abandoned by the contractors shortly

afterwards, and the works have not yet been

The formation of the Nenthorn section, which is the last of the rough country, is progressing

rapidly.
In connection with this Otago Central Railway I am of opinion that a great mistake has been made in not forcing on the construction of the first portions of the line, especially the Wingatui viaduct, so that the materials for the Deep Stream and Nenthorn sections could be taken up by rail, instead of being carted so far by road, which must materially increase the cost of construction. The Wingatui viaduct will take fully two years to complete, and until it is completed it will be a great bar to the progress of the works higher up the line.

Invercargill-Kingston and Branches, including Western Railways.

On the Mararoa Branch the platelaying has been extended for a further distance of 14 miles, making about 4 miles in all from its commencement. Beyond this point the line is formed for a further distance of about 2 miles.

On the Orepuki Branch Railway a further length of about 11 miles has been opened, and the platelaying is in progress on the remaining portion. This, with the exception of stations, which are not yet let, will complete the whole of the line to Orepuki, a distance in all of about 18 miles.

#### SURVEYS

Good progress has been made with these in both Islands.

In the North Island three lines have been examined as probable routes for the main trunk line between Wellington and Auckland, namely —one from Napier by way of Taupo; one from Marton by a line west of the Rangitikei River, Ruapehu, and Taupo; and one from Stratford by a line inland about 15 miles from the coast. In addition to the reports already before honourable members on this subject, further and fuller reports have since been prepared and supplied to the Committee appointed to inquire into the question of the most suitable route to be adopted.

In the Middle Island the principal surveys are those for the proposed East and West Coast Railway. Four main routes have been surveyed in detail: the Cannibal Gorge, Hurunui Pass, Arthur's Pass, and Lake Lyndon routes; and a reconnaissance survey has been made of a fifth by the Amuri Pass. Reports, with maps and sections, giving the result of these surveys, will be laid before you.

#### ADDITIONS TO OPENED RAILWAYS.

I shall now briefly refer to a few of the works which have been executed on the lines of railway which were open for traffic previously to the 31st March, 1883, outside ordinary repairs and renewals, to which I shall presently allude. And here I would wish to record my opinion that a very large amount of the works executed on these opened lines has been done much earlier than there was any real necessity for, and also

that the unnecessarily increased accommodation given in some instances is causing very great pressure to be put upon the Government for similarly unnecessary expenditure in other

places.

Kaipara-Waikato.—Various works have been executed on this line of railway, with the view of improving the facilities for traffic at the different stations, and for providing better accommodation for the repairs of rolling-stock, &c. This latter will be accomplished by the erection of new workshops at Newmarket, which are now nearly completed, and the erection of the necessary machinery is in pro-

Provision has also been made for increasing the convenience of passenger traffic in Auckland, where a new passenger-station building is now in progress under contract, opposite and parallel to Customhouse Street, on the re-

claimed land.

Westport-Ngakawau.—On this railway some minor improvements have been carried out during the year, and also some additions to

the plant and rolling-stock.

Greymouth-Brunnerton. — A few additions and improvements have been made on the open line, and an extension of 450 feet to the Greymouth wharf is under contract, to be completed in about two months.

Hurunui-Waitaki and Branches.—The works on the opened portions of these lines during the past year consist chiefly of numerous extensions and improvements at workshops and stations, and large additions to rolling-stock.

Waitaki-Bluff and Branches.—New stations are in progress at Dunedin and Invercargill, and the one at the Bluff has been rearranged and enlarged. Numerous extensions and improvements have been made at wayside stations,

and the rolling-stock has been largely increased.

Invercargill-Kingston and Branches, including Western Railways.—On these lines a considerable number of minor improvements have recently been effected, including several addi-

tions to stations.

By reason of these and many similar additions made to the opened railways during the past few years, we have now got 1,404 miles of railway complete and equipped-not of a description such as was proposed in 1870, when the scheme of public works was inaugurated by my colleague, Sir Julius Vogel, but lines of a much higher class, and of such a nature that much higher speeds can be run, and much greater traffic than was then anticipated can be

## WORKING RAILWAYS.

Without wishing to cast any reflections on the present General Manager of Railways, I unhesitatingly express my opinion that the condition and management of our railways are in a very unsatisfactory state. My honourable colleague, the Colonial Treasurer, recently said that, in many of the railway systems not nearly so large as that of ours in New Zealand, it would be thought absurd to leave to one man the virtually irresponsible control and management, without any one to consult on the many

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difficult points which arise from day to day. Yet such is the case here, and I fear no great change for the better can be expected till the whole system is altered.

I have been of the opinion, ever since our first railways were opened, that such a system of management as at present prevails could not produce satisfactory results; and, as each year has passed by, that opinion has been strengthened. And, if anything was wanted to convince me that a great change was wanted, the short time I have held office has afforded me ample proof that it cannot be made too soon.

It is a matter of the deepest regret to me that, owing to the late period of the year, the Government have come to the conclusion that it will be impossible to carry through a Bill this session creating Boards of Management, which would be responsible for the working of our railways; and, did I not feel convinced that the Government and the House were determined to take this course at the earliest date possible, I should not have consented to

take office.

The House will understand that, in saying this, I mean no disrespect. I feel bound to state these opinions, because I should other-wise accept a false position. Whilst I believe that strong Boards are necessary to guide and control the management, both in the Middle Island and the Auckland District, I find myself, with multifarious other duties to perform, virtually standing in the position of the two Boards. I will do the best I can, but I must not pretend to think that, unaided, I can reform the railway system as it requires to be reformed.

Honourable members would be amazed if they knew all the powers vested in the General Manager by the late Government by Orders in Council and otherwise. Again, however, let me say that I have the highest opinion of the General Manager's ability and zeal. It is as much due to him, as to ourselves, that he should not be placed in a false position.

Honourable members are aware that two great changes have been made during the year: the one being an alteration in the passenger rates and the doing-away with the ordinary return tickets, and the other a general

rise in the goods tariff.

There has hardly been time enough to ascertain the effect produced by the former, but the result of the inquiries I have made clearly points to the fact that the great bulk of the passenger traffic is confined to the two days in which the cheaper fares obtain; and, indeed, it would appear that the traffic is still being reduced on the other days of the week when the higher rates are charged. I feel convinced that in many directions the passenger rates will have to be reduced to attract the traffic the railway ought to carry, and that such reductions, if judiciously made, will result in increased receipts.

With regard to the rise in the goods tariff, there is no doubt it has produced a large in-crease to the revenue. While this increase in the receipts has taken place, it is an undoubted

fact that a great deal of the traffic has been | diverted from the railways in some parts of the country, and that the carriers on the roads are competing successfully with the railways. I am sure honourable members will agree with me that this state of things should not occur.

Comparing the quantity of goods carried over the railways during the year 1883-84 with the

year 1882-83, we find as follows:-

1882-83. Quantity. 1883-84. 686,287 Live stock, number . . 478,003 Goods, tons .. .. 1,564,823 1,700,040

From this it will be seen that there was an increase during the year 1883-84; but I consider the increase would have been much larger had more determined efforts been made to

attract traffic to the railways.

The remedy, as I have already informed the House, lies in a thorough revision, not only of the rates charged, but in the classification of the goods; and, while this revision is being made, every opportunity must be taken to make the rates press as lightly as possible on all local productions, and on all articles the reduction on which will help either the settlers through the country, or the local industries which are already established or are likely to succeed.

## ROADS NORTH OF AUCKLAND.

The vote taken for these roads last year was \$45,000; but, as there were liabilities existing at the end of the previous year amounting to £12,200, the sum available for distribution was £32,800.

This amount was distributed amongst the various counties as follows, namely.-

		,	,	
Waitemata		• •		£5,700
Rodney				5,700
Hobson			• •	5,000
Whangarei		• •	• •	5,400
Bay of Islands	• •	• •	• •	4,300
Mongonui	• •	• •	• •	4,300
Hokianga	• •	••	• •	2,400

Total .. ..£32,800

Of this amount about £12,000 was for construction of the Main North Road, about £3,000 for wharves and other special works, and the balance for ordinary county works.

BOADS AND BRIDGES GENERALLY, INCLUDING "MAIN BOADS" AND "MISCELLANEOUS ROADS AND BRIDGES."

North Island. - South of Auckland: The principal work executed in the North Island has been the completion of a road leading from Cambridge to Ohinemutu, in all 55 miles in length; but a large expenditure has also been incurred in keeping the main roads in repair.

Middle Island.—The only important roads in the Middle Island on which the Government is doing much work are from Blenheim to Nelson, Nelson to the West Coast, and Hokitika to Christchurch. The last link in the road from Blenheim to Nelson, viá the Rai Valley, is now in progress; also a bridge over the Pelorus. Bridges have been built, and other improvements effected, on the Nelson-West following table:-

Coast Road. In addition to the maintenance and general improvements, the bridging of the Taipo and smooth Wainihinihi, on the Hokitika-Christchurch Road, is in hand. Bridges have also been completed or are in progress over the Wairau, Clarence, Waiau, Rakaia, and Taieri Rivers.

BOADS TO OPEN UP CROWN LANDS BEFORE SALE.

The particulars of the numerous works under this heading will be found in Table 5 of the Appendices to this Statement, from which it will be seen that, during the twelve months ending the 31st March last, the sum of £84,631 was expended. The importance of opening Crown lands by pioneer roads previous to their sale need not be enlarged on here, the question having been fully dealt with in the annual reports of the Land and Survey Departments. By stating this I am not giving my opinion whether the roads have been judiciously selected or not.

Out of the sum of £268,415 on the estimates of 1883-84, of which £205,000 was allocated out of the last loan of £3,000,000, the sum of . £103,713, including liabilities, was, on the 31st March last, available for the carrying-on of the

road-lines already on the estimates.

With the large public estate still awaiting settlement, the demands for this class of work may be said to be almost unlimited; but, as only a certain amount of work can be executed in each year, it is proposed to ask the House for a further vote this year of £29,595 to open up blocks of land in the several land districts which have been surveyed, but withheld from disposal by the department pending their being opened up by road. The particulars of these proposals will appear in the estimates.

BOADS UNDER THE ROADS AND BRIDGES CON-STRUCTION ACT.

Main Roads: One-fourth of cost of work to be provided or repaid in ten years by the local body, and the balance to be found by the Government.—Under this heading the total amount of the applications received on the 30th June, 1883, when reduced in accordance with the Act of 1883, came to £224,588.

Of these applications, those which were for bridges were granted in full, while, as regards those which were for road works exclusive of bridges, the available fund only admitted of their being granted to the extent of one-fifth of the amounts applied for. The total amount thus distributed for bridges and road works together amounted to £70,681.

In addition to these ordinary applications, there were also applications for repairs of extraordinary damages by floods, amounting to-£19,825, and grants were made on these to the:

extent of £10,282.

The total applied for altogether on account. of main roads was therefore £244,413, and the total granted £80,963, of which £11,842 was for bridges, and £39,121 for other works.

The amounts granted within each of the several provincial districts will be found in the

Provincial Dis-	Applica	Grants.			
tricts.	tions.	Bridges	Roads.	Total.	
	£		<u> </u>	£	
Auckland	73,187	5.260	15,177	20,437	
Hawke's Bav	14.063	4.125	1.323	5,448	
Taranaki	8,110	3,529	1,619	5,148	
Wellington	38.275	3,768	5,466	9,234	
Nelson	5,048	2.079	442	2.521	
Marlborough	4,756	281	876	1,157	
Westland	9.977	5,000	747	5,747	
Canterbury	21,240	7.566	2,218	9,784	
Otago	69,757	10,234	11,253	21,487	
Totals	244,413	41.842	39,121	80.963	

District Roads and River Works: amount granted to be repaid in fifteen years. —On account of this class of works the total amount applied for during the year ending March last has been £90,596; and in pursuance of these applications loans have been granted to the extent of £22,941. Of this sum, £21,495 was for roads, and £1,446 for river works. The several amounts granted within the various provincial districts are shown in the table below:—

Provincial I	istri	cts.	Applica	atio	ons.	Gran	ıts	•
Auckland Hawke's Bay Taranaki Wellington Nelsou Marlborough Westland Canterbury Otago			2 2,732 1,270 2,000 12,894 1,446 5,500 4,754	0 0 0	0 0 0	2,732 1,270 1,200 11,904 1,446 1,200 3,099	s. 0000 000	0
Totals			30,596	0	0	22,941	0	0

### GOLD-FIELDS BOADS.

Roads. - Under the heading of Gold-Fields Roads an expenditure of £26,603 was incurred during the last financial year in the construction of roads on the gold fields, and in subsidies granted to County Councils for the opening-out of tracks and other works in aid of prospecting; and the liabilities existing on these works at the end of March last amounted to £17,197. The details of the various works undertaken will be found in Table No. 6 of the Appendices.

WATERWORKS ON GOLD FIELDS.

From Table No. 8 it will be seen that a sum of £16,596 was expended during the year on the construction and extension of reservoirs, waterraces, and drainage channels, and that liabilitics amounting to £7,383 were outstanding on account of these works at the end of March

It may be well here to point out that this expenditure out of loan is for entirely new works, and does not include the maintenance and repair of such works as the Kumara and Naseby Sludge-channels, and the large water-races which are paid for out of consolidated revenue. by 2,820 miles which is duplexed.

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PURCHASE OF NATIVE LANDS, NORTH ISLAND. The areas of land the purchases of which were completed during the year ending the 31st March last were as follow: In the Auckland Provincial District, 77,721 acres; in the Wellington Provincial District, 120,861 acres; and in the Taranaki Provincial District, 10,280

acres: amounting in all to 208,862 acres. The total area of Native land purchased under the Immigration and Public Works Acts

up to the 31st March last was 3,958,233 acres, at a cost of £828,866; and a further area of 1,013,053 acres is under purchase, on which £92,827 has been paid. Total disbursements up to end of March last, £921,693.

#### IMMIGRATION.

As the House is aware, the schedule to the Loan Act of 1882 provided a sum of £200,000 for immigration. Since that time assisted and free passages have been granted to 9,619 immigrants, who have arrived in the colony as follows, viz.,-

Between 1st April, 1882, and 30th June, 1883. 3,205 Between 1st July, 1883, and 30th 6,267 June, 1884 ... Since 30th June, 1884 147

In addition to these, the Government have advices of 150 more immigrants - principally single women - having left Plymouth on the 31st August last.

The total number of immigrants of all classes introduced by the Colonial Government since the inauguration of the immigration scheme is 110,833.

With the exception of a small number of single women, whom the Agent-General caused to be specially selected, the whole of the immigrants who have arrived in the colony since April, 1882, have been nominated; but since the 12th March last even nominated immigration-except for single women-has been suspended.

A number of the persons, part of whose passages were provided by their friends, were suddenly told that they could not be brought out. The hardship to which these persons have been subjected has been so forcibly represented to the Government, and their right of complaint is so clear, that instructions have been given that in all cases where the nomination-money has been already paid passages are to be provided for the persons nominated.

#### TELEGRAPH EXTENSION.

The work done towards extension of telegraph lines during the past year has consisted of 100 miles of new lines, with wire complete, and 89 miles of additional wire, erected partly on the new lines and partly on lines previously existing.

The total length of telegraph lines now existing in the colony is 4,074 miles, carrying 10,037 miles of wire, and, in addition to this, the transmitting capacity of the wire is increased

The extensions at present contemplated amount to 142 miles of line.

#### PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

In the North Island the principal works which were in hand during the year were the new gaol at Auckland, and the convict prison, Mount Cook, Wellington, at both of which good progress has been made.

The post and telegraph offices in Wellington have also been completed and opened during

the last year.

In the Middle Island the principal buildings completed were the lunatic asylums at Sunny-

side, Canterbury, and Seacliff, Otago.

The total expenditure on public buildings in both Islands during the year amounted to £164,376, and the liabilities at end of March last were £41,753.

## LIGHTHOUSES AND HARBOUR WORKS.

At Kaipara a lighthouse has been erected on the North Head, and is now very near completion. The training-wall erected in the Aorere River, at Collingwood, has been completed, and has fully answered the purpose intended. The French Pass lighthouse and the necessary buildings are now complete, and the Pass was lighted on the 1st October.

At Jackson's Head a substantial beacon has been erected on the reef lying nearest to the Head, which it is expected will prove to be of service in marking the width of the channel.

At Westport the small river training-wall on the northern side is well advanced. A survey is in progress of a line of railway to Cape Foulwind, which has been suggested as a means of bringing stone to the breakwater.

At Oreymouth the southern breakwater was continued at the usual rate of progress till May last, when the works were suspended in con-

sequence of the vote being exhausted.

As shown by the statements furnished by the engineers, the harbour works at Greymouth are proving of great benefit to the port.

When the Harbour Bills now before Parliament become law, further provision for these harbours will be unnecessary.

# COAL FIELDS.

For some years past the coal fields of the colony have been left to private enterprise, the only relation which Government has maintained to them being that of their control and inspection under the regulations of "The Mines. Act, 1874."

The report of the Secretary for Mines, dated the 20th June, 1884 (Parliamentary Paper C.-5), is already in the hands of members, and shows that this most essential industry is slowly

but surely increasing in importance.

Thus, during the last six years, while the total consumption of coal in the colony has increased 75 per cent., the proportion which the coal raised in the colony bears to the imported coal has increased from 48 per cent. in 1878 to 77 per cent. in 1863.

I regret to say, however, that a marked fall-

ing-off in production has been experienced i the case of the Kawakawa Mine, at the Bay of Islands, on which the northern part of the colony has for many years been chiefly dependent for its supply of steam coal. Any permanent failure of this mine would be a serious loss to the colony, as the expensive railway that has been made to connect it with a deep-water wharf would in that case become unproductive. From the reports of the Geological Department there appears, however, to be good ground for expecting that the falling-off is only one of the fluctuations incident to the development of all coal fields, and it is anticipated that a more active and extended use of the diamond drill in the district will lead to the discovery of fresh coal seams.

Statement.

A similar failure was experienced in the case of the important Springfield Mine, from which Christchurch is largely supplied; but in that case the company procured a diamond drill, and the result of its use in discovering new coal-seams on the property has been very suc-

There is no doubt that in the diamond drill, if it is used with judgment, we have the means of placing the development of our coal mines on a solid basis, by obtaining, without expensive shafts, accurate records of the thickness and nature of the coal-measures.

The principal areas occupied by coal-measures, concerning the extent and value of which more exact information is required, are

the following:

In the North Island. — The Bay of Islands District, the district at the source of the Waipa and the Mokau Rivers, and the Lower Mokau District, where seams of valuable steam coal are known to exist, and probably to extend into the upper district of the Wanganui River.

In the South Island .- The area of coal-formation on the Paparoa Range, north of Grey-mouth, and the country from Reefton to the sources of the Buller River, require more defi-nite exploration, similar to that which the Mount Rochfort Coal Field has received. The fact that large coal deposits exist in the above district has been ascertained, but the determination of their exact extent and value might have an important bearing on the great question of the most advantageous way of improving the facilities for export trade from the West Coast, and also on the best lines for internal com-

There can scarcely be any doubt that, if the colony could afford to give substantial encouragement towards the employment of diamond drills by coal companies and private persons, much good would ensue. Good results would also accrue to the colony, and considerable sums of money would be saved to companies and individuals, were there a more liberal expenditure on the Geological Department, which at present receives a very small vote.

#### PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE.

The proposals I am about to make are based on principles which, after long discussion with my colleagues, I have decided on submittin

to the House as the foundation of our future public works policy. There are two which we must bear distinctly in mind: There are two points

First, that there is great work for us to do in the way of extending the railway system, of feeding the railways, and of opening up the country by the construction of roads and bridges; and at intervals, when the colony needs it, of increasing the population by immigration, which, to speak moderately, cannot be in any sense exhausted for two or three generations. To put it in another form, the people have before them, for a longer period than it is necessary to look forward to, the task of colonizing the country. They have not to do this by spurts, with intervals of inaction, but by steady and continuous action.

The second point I have to ask the House to remember is that, inasmuch as we are not engaged on a spasmodic work, but on one that will last our lives and the lives of our children and children's children, we must endeavour to bring to its performance as much of system as

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is possible.

If we consider these two points jointly, it will be evident that they really amount to no more than this: that we must steadily pursue the functions of colonization as fast as, and no faster than, our means permit; and it will also be evident that, though we may make prognostications of the extent of the future money at our disposal, an exact determination can only be arrived at from year to year.

But, in order to obtain a general index of the future means, it is necessary to know what is the policy of finance that is to be adopted.

The Colonial Treasurer has already at some length enunciated the views of the Government on the subject, and I may be permitted to supplement what has already been stated.

Taking the present year as a starting-point, the object after this year will be to bring the expenditure charged on the Consolidated Fund within the means of that Fund without the aid of the property-tax. We foresee that that can easily be done by shifting to local expenditure some of the present charges made on the Consolidated Fund-notably the charitable expenditure, and some other small items, let us say, amounting, with the charitable aid, to some £100,000 a year. It is clear that the local bodies cannot undertake this without an additional revenue, and, to dispense with needless points of controversy at present, we may suppose that the £100,000 is supplied by either a property-tax or a land-tax.

But other revenue will also have to be supplied to local bodies, as it cannot be satisfactory to continue for a lengthened period the policy of making and maintaining roads and bridges out of borrowed money, which has been virtually what has been going on for some time. The borrowing for roads and bridges cannot be abruptly brought to a conclusion, but its cessation must be an end kept in view. I need not further pursue the subject of providing local revenue, but may come the means of pursuing colonizing operations. If we accept the starting-point of this year which I have assumed, we shall have to ask ourselves how, without increasing the taxation. we may have the means of meeting the additional annual charges on the money borrowed for the work of colonization.

There are three sources of increased revenue. or increased means, to which to look forward; First, the natural net increases of revenue from year to year; second, the increase of revenue from new railways, and also the increase in revenue—apart from natural increases—from existing railways, as they are fed by new railways, roads, and bridges; and, third, the annual saving from reduced rates of interest on loans converted, apart altogether from the saving of the expenditure of Sinking Fund, with which I have, in this Statement, nothing to do.

Now, there should be next year, and for some years to come, at least a net natural increase of revenue of £50,000. There should also be over many years an average additional saving of at least £20,000 annually on account of reduced interest on converted loans. Some years it will amount to a great deal more. From the other source, if we pursue the wise policy of endeavouring as soon as possible to obtain returns from borrowed money expended, we should obtain considerable increases of revenue apart from the natural increases. When the North Island Trunk Railway is finished the increases from feeding to all the fragmentary systems in the Island will be enormous. Putting this prospect on one side, I anticipate that, if you allow me to pursue the works with a view to early returns, there will be, during the next two or three years, an average increase in railway revenue of at least £25,000 per annum.

We have, then, a net natural increase of revenue of £50,600, an addition each year to the savings on account of conversion of £20,000, and £25,000 increase on account of new works:

in all, £95,000.

The Government considers that this justifies our borrowing a million and a half during next year, and that the probabilities are that in future years the increases of revenue will justify at least additions of from one to one and a half millions a year. The additional burden of this million and a half will amount, at present rates, to £60,000; but probably in a year or two the money may be borrowed at 34 instead of 4 per cent. But it will be said I have forgotten the additional charge of the third million to be negotiated next year. third million, however, has not been forgotten; but, in considering the difference between this year and next, it has to be remembered that the interest on money obtained by temporary expedients and in anticipation of the loan will cover the amount of interest on the third mil-

It is a million and a half that, as has already been stated, we propose to take authority to borrow; and I may say we also propose that it should cover expenditure up to the end of to that which is of most moment to my pre- | March, 1886. I have not taken into account sent object—considering how we are to find | the annual charge of the North Island Trunk March, 1886. I have not taken into account



Line One-Million Loan, because, up to the extent of £100,000, I think we can provide for that line out of the million and a half; and the Government wish to defer negotiating that loan until the expenditure on the line is very heavy. At first, with all eagerness to push it on, it will be impossible to spend much money on it; whilst, if the whole sum is brought into the Treasury, there will be the old danger of its being spent for something else.

In the manner of stating the votes proposed to be taken for railway works this session two changes have been made, which it is believed will be very beneficial, not alone in facilitating the work of the department, and enabling the Minister to realize the state of affairs, but also in letting honourable members see the amount of money which is proposed to be spent during the year in the actual construction of railway

works in their several districts.

The changes which I allude to are as fol-

low:

1. The taking of separate appropriations for additional works required on opened railways, as distinct from new works for extension of railways; and

2. The taking of separate appropriations for the permanent-way and rolling-stock required for all railways, including additions to opened lines, instead of, as hitherto, including the permanent-way and rolling-stock in the votes for

construction works.

As regards the first of these proposals namely, the taking of separate appropriations for additional works required on the opened railways - I think honourable members will bear me out in the assertion that it was very difficult in the past to realize, from the amount of the vote taken, how much new railway works might be reasonably anticipated, as a very large proportion of the sums which have been voted for each railway from year to year has been expended on additions and improvements to the portion of railway previously opened.

By taking the votes entirely separately, as

is now proposed, honourable members will be enabled to see, not only how much money is proposed to be devoted to each new extension of the railway system, and to additions to each opened railway, but will also be enabled to realize the total sum required from year to year for additions to the opened lines as a whole, including additional rolling-stock.

As regards the second proposal which I have alluded to - namely, the taking of separate appropriations for permanent-way and rolling-stock, as distinct from the appropriations for construction works—it is believed that this also will be a great help to honourable members in enabling them to realize the extent of construction works which will actually be done in the various localities, besides having the additional advantage of enabling the departmental accounts to be kept in a manner which will be more easily understood than by the method now in vogue.

This present method consists in charging the permanent-way and rolling-stock, when ordered from England, to a suspense account, in terms

of section 4 of the Immigration and Public Works Appropriation Acts passed each year; and it has the daily and hourly disadvantage that the Minister can never tell what the state of the vote actually is from time to time, the whole amount of the suspense account being a charge upon the whole class of votes for railways, but the amount chargeable to each railway being indefinite and indeterminable until the close of the year's transactions.

By the system now proposed, of taking a separate vote for permanent-way and rolling-stock, all these complications will be avoided, and the statements of accounts from time to time under votes taken for actual construction works will show clearly the amount actually expended, and also the amount still available for expenditure upon that class of works.

On the 1st April, 1884, there was an available balance for expenditure—assuming that the advances outstanding were cash—of £877,912. This does not include a payment of £75,208

due from the Land Fund.

The outstanding liabilities on the 31st March, 1884, after deducting a large sum for Native land purchases not likely to be wanted for some time, amounted to £1,313,550. Between the 31st March and the 31st August, 1884, further liabilities of £236,446 have been incurred, making the total liabilities £1,549,996.

I have already stated the available balance at the end of March last was £877,912: deducting this from the liabilities, there is a deficiency of £672,084. But, then, there is the third million of the 1882 loan, and, assuming it to come into the year's account and to net par, there will be a balance of £327,916 only available for the votes of this year beyond liabilities. With the exception of this small balance, therefore, the votes of last year practically disposed of the Three-Million Loan, and not only of that, but of the £250,000 raised under the Local Inscribed Stock Act, the proceeds of which have also been drawn into the Fund.

As far as I can see, from careful examination, it was intended that the Three-Million Loan should last out the year 1885-86. The financial year ends on the 31st March, and the Act prescribes that one million only shall be borrowed in the three years 1883, 1884, and 1885. The third million could not have been expected to be available many weeks before the end of March: thus, it must have been intended to spend the money before it was borrowed, or that the third million should last till 1886. But the then Government declared that they would not spend money before it was borrowed; so it must have been intended that the loan should last out next year; whilst, as I have said, with an additional loan of £250,000, there is only for the new votes of this year £327,916.

It is necessary that I should point all this out, so that we may have on record the point at which the new loan which the Government propose intervenes, as also that you may realize that a great part of that new loan is required to fulfil the schedule of the Three-Million Loan Act, besides the £250,000 which has also been

absorbed.

On the other hand, so far as the votes are concerned, it is only justice to my predecessor to point out that the votes of each year include much more than can be expended within the A system has grown up of voting sufficient to cover the probable cost of contracts, whether or not these contracts can be executed during the year. If I follow the same system, and take large votes for new works, honourable members must understand that in the few months that remain of this year only a small portion will be spent, so that up to the end of March next I estimate we shall not trench upon the actual cash proceeds of the proposed new loan of a million and a half much, if any, more than £200,000: for that loan the Government is, in fact, providing for expenditure for the year 1885-86.

Public Works

The House will agree with me that it is sound policy to provide the money before incurring the expenditure. We propose to take authority for a loan of a million and a half, as has already been intimated by the Colonial Treasurer. Adding that to the available balance at the end of March last and to the third million of the loan of 1882, we shall have a total of £3,377,912 available for expenditure from the 1st April last for liabilities and new works; or, deducting the liabilities to the end of August of £1,549,996, there will be £1,827,916 left for new works, which is another way of stating the balance of £327,916 out of the Three-Million Loan added to the proposed new loan of one and a half

millions. In order to make this complicated subject quite clear, I should explain that I have treated the liabilities of £236.446 incurred between the end of March and the end of August as liabilities. As far, however, as the Government incurring them is concerned, they may treat them as fresh works during the present year, unvoted as yet, but to be voted in the estimates. On that footing the late Government may say they had £236,446 more to vote for the present year than the £327,916 I give them credit for.

In view of these facts and figures, I propose to ask the House to vote in all this year, for liabilities already existing, and for new undertakings to be presently entered into, the sum of £2,810,280, made up as follows:

For Immigration, with liabilities at the end of August amounting to £62,280, we ask for a vote of £100,000.

For General Departmental Expenses, with liabilities £12,759, we ask for a vote of £30,057.

For Railways we ask for a vote of £1,567,516. On this sum we have to charge £903,898 for existing liabilities, and it also includes £522,584 for additions to opened lines; but, of this sum of £522,584, there are existing liabilities of £845,295. We have also to pay, out of this vote, for rails for renewals on working railways, the sum of £100,000, and there are existing liabilities under this head of £48,868. The £100,000 has, however, to be repaid to the Public Works Fund by the working railways.

For Roads, with liabilities of £359,464, we

ask for a vote of £737,008. This includes

£304,200 for grants-in-aid under the Roads and Bridges Construction Act, on which there are liabilities amounting to £204,200.

For Waterworks on Gold Fields, with liabilities £7,663, we ask for a vote of £12,857.

For Purchase of Native Lands, North Island, we ask for a vote of £90,000, that being the amount estimated to be required to meet the payments which will become due during the year now current.

For Telegraph Extension, with liabilities of

£20,423, we ask for a vote of £29,322.

For Public Buildings, with liabilities £54,526, we ask for a vote of £171,104.

For Lighthouses and Harbour Works, with liabilities of £26,988, we ask for a vote of

And for Charges and Expenses of raising Loans we ask for a vote of £16,500, that being the amount estimated to be required to cover the cost of raising the last million loan which was floated in England.

With the exception of the votes for railways in course of construction, I do not consider it necessary to state here our proposals with regard to each individual work, as all the necessary information with regard to road works, &c., which are proposed, will be found in the estimates, which I shall presently lay before the House; but, as regards the railways in course of construction or proposed, it is desirable that I should state here the intentions of the Government with regard to them.

Taking them in the order they will appear in the estimates, our intentions are as follow:-

Kawakawa.—The vote set down for this work is merely sufficient to cover existing liabilities, but it is proposed to have plans prepared so as to enable the Government to put the extension of the line towards Kamo in hand early next year.

Whangarei-Kamo.—The vote proposed is sufficient to cover all existing liabilities.

Hamilton - Cambridge Railway. - The vote proposed in this case will cover the completion and equipment of the line throughout.

Hamilton - Te Aroha and Grahamstown -Kopu. — The vote proposed for these works will complete and equip the railways between

the points indicated.

Napier to Woodville and Bunnythorpe.—This line we propose to complete throughout as rapidly as possible, and the vote proposed for this year is sufficient to cover as much of it as can conveniently be let by contract before the next meeting of Parliament.

Wellington-Woodville.—The vote proposed for this will be sufficient to complete the sections

at present in hand.

New Plymouth-Foxton.—The vote now proposed for this line is estimated to be sufficient to complete and equip the railway throughout, including the extension from New Plymouth to the breakwater.

Wellington-Foxton.—In this case the vote is merely to cover existing liabilities on account of land purchases, &c., originally undertaken by the Government.

Main Trunk Railway, North Island.—The

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Government has on more than one occasion expressed its conviction of the expediency of hastening forward to the utmost the construction of the North Island Main Trunk Railway, and, the route of the line having now been decided, I have been enabled to issue instructions for surveys to be proceeded with for the first section south of Te Awamutu, and I hope in a few weeks to be prepared to call for tenders for this work.

I shall leave to my colleague, the Native Minister, the task of obtaining land along the

It will be necessary in any case to commence the construction at the other end of the line; and it will greatly facilitate the rapid prosecution of the work if the construction of the Wellington – Manawatu Railway is vigorously pushed on.

Nelson-Roundell.—The vote proposed in this case is sufficient to complete the Wai-iti sec-

Greymouth-Reefton.—For this railway it is only proposed to vote sufficient to cover existing liabilities and a few contingencies which may be anticipated, as its construction is expected to be undertaken by private enterprise, as a portion of the railway from Nelson to Brunnerton.

Greymouth-Hokitika.—For this railway it is proposed to take a vote this year sufficient to cover the cost of the completion of the four miles from Hokitika to the Arahura, and it is intended to continue its construction from year to year until Hokitika is connected by rail with the Port of Greymouth.

Blenheim Southwards.—This railway we intend to complete as rapidly as possible to the Awatere, and the vote proposed will cover another contract which is intended to be let this year, in addition to the existing one.

Hurunui Northwards.—The vote proposed for this railway is estimated to be sufficient to complete and equip the section at present under contract between Hurunui and the Red Poet

Hurunui-Waipara.—This railway, including the completion of the Hurunui Bridge, with iron cylinders instead of piles, will be finished as rapidly as possible, and the vote proposed will be sufficient to complete and equip it.

Upper Ashburton Branch.—The vote proposed for this is estimated to be sufficient to complete the line to Mount Somers Township.

Lincoln-Little River.—We consider that this railway, which has been a very long time in hand, should now be completed throughout to Little River; and the vote proposed will be sufficient to do this.

Albury Branch.—In this case, as the railway is already completed as far as it is necessary to carry it at present, the vote proposed is merely sufficient to cover existing liabilities and con-

Oxford to Sheffield and Whitecliffs Extension.

This line is also complete from Oxford to Sheffield; but there are some outstanding liabilities and contingencies to be met, and the vote proposed is sufficient to cover these, and

also a short extension at the end of the Whitecliffs line to give access to the several coal mines across the river.

Livingstone Branch.—This railway was commenced and partly formed throughout its whole length of twelve miles as far back as five years ago, and the £40,000 odd expended upon it up to March last has been lying waste for several years. It is now thought, therefore, that it is time that some return should be got for all this expenditure; and we therefore propose to vote this year a sum sufficient to complete it throughout.

Painerston-Waihemo (8 miles).—This railway has also been in hand an unconscionable length of time, and we now propose to complete it forthwith. The vote to be asked for will be sufficient to do this.

Catlin's River Branch.—For this railway we propose a vote sufficient to complete and equip the line to the Port Molyneux Road.

Waipahi-Heriotburn. — This railway being already completed, the vote proposed is merely to cover existing liabilities.

Edendale-Toitois.—It is proposed to complete this railway to the end of the present formation—namely, to a point four miles beyond Wyndham; and the vote to be asked for will

be sufficient for that purpose.

Otago Central Railway.—As already stated, I consider that the Hindon section of this railway should have been more rapidly pushed ahead, and it will be my endeavour to further this end during the current year by all means in my power, and also to push forward the construction of the line generally as rapidly as is at all possible, in order to utilize as soon as practicable the large expenditure of close upon £200,000 already made upon it. With this view it is proposed to ask this year for a vote which will be sufficient to enable all the work to be put in hand which can be reasonably got at without entailing a heavy loss for carriage of material.

Lumsden-Mararoa. — The vote proposed for this line is sufficient to complete it to the end of present formation—namely, to a point six miles from its commencement.

Gore-Kelso.—It is not intended to continue this line at present, so the vote proposed is merely sufficient to cover cost of working survey and land plans.

Waimea—Switzers.—The vote proposed for this is sufficient to complete it up to the end of the seventh mile.

Seaward Bush.—For this railway a vote is proposed sufficient to complete it to the end of the sixth mile.

Riverton-Orepuki.—In this case the vote asked for will complete and equip the railway throughout up to its present terminus near Orepuki.

If the House consents to vote the amount which I have intimated that we now intend to ask for railways, we shall have, I expect, by the end of this financial year, a length of 1,480 miles of railway open for traffic, as against 1,404 opened up to the 31st March last.

Honourable members are aware that large

sums have been expended on roads to the north | of Auckland in lieu of expenditure on railways. This course was decided on many years since, it being considered that roads were a more immediate object of necessity than railways. The time has come, however, when the people to the north of Auckland are very earnestly appealing for an extension of the trunk system of railways through their districts, with the view to connect the various settlements.

It is urged with great force that the tim-ber, gum, coal, and other minerals which the northern districts possess, together with the capabilities of the soil of a very large quantity of land, would make such a railway at once remunerative, and the means of conferring a large amount of indirect advantage on existing settlers, besides inducing a considerable increase of settlement.

The Government think the subject demands attention, and will cause inquiries to be made in order to place the House in possession, next session, of accurate information concerning the route and prospects of additional railway communication, the extent of Crown lands likely to be benefited, the advantages to existing settlers, and what funds towards payment for the construction of the railway would be derivable from the disposal of the forests, and from rentals obtainable from suitable-sized farms in the districts through which the line would run.

Although, as before stated, I do not propose to go into all the road votes in detail, it is necessary that I should say a few words as regards the total amounts proposed to be asked for under three of the principal classes of roads -namely, the roads north of Auckland, the grants-in-aid under the Roads and Bridges Construction Act, and the roads to open up ands before sale, as it might otherwise appear

that these amounts are excessive.

For the roads north of Auckland our proposal is to take a vote for the whole of the balance of the amount already allocated in the loan of 1882, which amounts to £103,800, and to distribute this sum amongst the various local bodies, to be expended by them during the remainder of this, and the whole of the next, financial year. This is done in order that they may make arrangements for the works being executed during the most suitable period of the year, as it has been found that the annual allocations of small amounts, made in midsummer, have the effect of running the con-struction into the winter-time, and also of necessitating its being done in a very piecemeal fashion.

For grants-in-aid under the Roads and Bridges Construction Act, the vote proposed and the one which so materially swells the total amount asked for under the general heading of Roads - is £304,200; and it has to be explained that this sum includes a liability of £204,200, being the total outstanding balance of all allocations made up to end of March last, together with £100,000 which we propose for allocation this year for main roads. This will leave the item of district roads still to be provided for under the permanent appropriation

of £100,000 made by "The Roads and Bridges Construction Act, 1882," the balance available for allocation under this head, including some £1,803 of debentures already paid, being £43,987.

Statement.

For the roads to open up lands before sale the amount proposed to be voted is £133,308, that being the balance of loan allocation of 1882, with some small additions recommended this year.

I venture to express a hope that next year such a system of local government will be introduced as will make it unnecessary to come to this House for such an amount of

votes for roads and bridges.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I shall only add that I hope when the time comes round for the next annual Public Works Statement I shall be able to show that the department generally is being administered with greater economy than at present; that I may have been able to place the tariff on the railways in a more satisfactory state; and that I shall be able to submit a Bill providing for the creation of non-political Boards of Management, which will be satisfactory to this House and the country.

I have, I am sure, wearied the House, and porhaps I have trespassed too far on its patience; and it only remains for me now to thank you, Mr. Speaker, and honourable members for the indulgence accorded to me.

I now move, That the estimates sent down by His Excellency the Governor be referred to

Committee of Supply.

Mr. STOUT.—In seconding the motion, I wish to make a brief statement with reference to the position of the Government in regard to the railway proposals they have brought before the House, including that dealt with this afternoon. I make this as a Ministerial statement, because it does not refer to details of public works which have been laid before the House by my colleague. The Government wish the House distinctly to understand that all the proposals and intentions stated by my colleague in regard to railways in both Islands stand together, and stand, moreover, connected with Bills which have passed this House, to which we have already said we attach paramount importance. The Government are not inclined to take too local a view of railways, and to say we cannot make a railway to this town be-cause we cannot make it to another. Patience must be exercised by localities, so that railways may be carried on with some regard to speedily obtaining returns from works in progress. But, whilst not taking a contractedly narrow view of local claims, the Government have no notion of seeing one Island raised to a prosperous condition and the other plunged into gloomy depression. I will go, indeed, further, and add that, since there appears an inclination to bring about such a result, the Government will be no party to it, nor will they suffer it. They would sooner that this session should be entirely barren, and that another session should immediately follow, with or without an appeal to the constituencies.

Mr. J. W. THOMSON.—Sir, this is the only



occasion on which the House will have any opportunity whatever of making any observations regarding public works. It is a long time since the Financial Statement was made—five weeks. I believe. I do not recollect such a long interval between the delivery of a Financial Statement and that of a Public Works Statement, which may be said to be parts of one whole. I think one should follow the other as speedily as possible. I shall not pretend to go into the Public Works Statement minutely, or at any length, as I did not hear plainly what the Minister said. As it is known that these Statements are always printed before delivery, I think they might also be circulated, and then we should be able to follow them, and perhaps take up the running more effectively. The honourable gentleman told us, first of all, that there were between two hundred and three hundred miles of railway in progress. That is to say, a great deal of money has been spent on those works and is lying unreproductive. It is not returning anything in the shape of interest, and it is of no use to the public; and I was pleased to hear him say he intended to push on those works with due celerity. The honourable gentleman spoke of the great expendi-ture on finished lines. In fact, considering the small amount of interest which our railways are returning—only 21 per cent., according to the report of the General Manager last session, while the money costs us about 5 per cent.there must be a very considerable loss, and, when we add to this the large expenditure on open lines, there cannot be very much over. I think we must look forward to a time in the case of every line when we must say the railway shall keep itself—that expenditure on a line must be taken out of the receipts of that line, so as to give some finality to this expenditure of borrowed money on lines that have been opened for years. This money is spent chiefly on extravagant railway-stations. Then, the honourable gentleman told us that the repairs made recently have been executed earlier than there was any occasion for.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—I did not say

repairs. I was alluding to the additions.

Mr. J. W. THOMSON.—I understood the honourable gentleman to be referring to repairs, and my idea was that it would be better to make repairs that might not be considered quite necessary than that there should be any risk to human life. Then, the honourable gentleman is of opinion that we should have Boards of Management for the railways. is a large subject; and, even if we did get Boards, they might not prove as satisfactory as the honourable gentleman anticipates. As we propose to enter upon very large works, and considering the large amount of liabilities connected with immigration, I am inclined to think that the vote for immigration is perhaps rather too small, and I think it would have been well if the honourable gentleman, instead of simply telling us the amount of the vote, had given us some idea of the intentions of the Government with respect to immigration, because the views of the Treasurer, as embodied in his Statement,

were rather indefinite, and not quite satisfac-Then, the honourable member referred to public buildings. I did not catch the amount that he said would probably be expended during the current year on public buildings; but we have in this colony expended on them about £1,100,000 or £1,200,000, and a great part of this has been spent on wooden buildings. Now, what has reconciled me to this expenditure of borrowed money on public buildings was simply that there was a large Sinking Fund accruing. That appeared to me a set-off to the almost unjustifiable expenditure on public buildings which could only be expected to last for a lifetime. But I understand that this Sinking Fund is now to be appropriated for public works; and that appropriation will mean this: that all the buildings that have hitherto been erected in the colony will be thrown upon our children and our children's children; and that is a wrong thing to do. think we should be very chary about doing that. Those who come after us will have plenty to do for themselves, and I think that, as far as buildings are concerned, there should be a sinking fund, so that the generation which really reaps the benefit of those buildings may pay for them. We have, as representa-tives, a duty not only to the people at present in New Zealand, but also to those who come after us. It is quite possible that in future years this country may be in difficulties—the colony may not be able to pay its way—and if that should happen, the people will only be too anxious to look out for reasons that may appear to them just why they should not pay their way; and, if we have placed upon them burdens for erection of public buildings which are all gone, that might appear to them a fair reason why they should not keep faith with the public creditor. So that we must endea-vour to act, especially as regards finance, in such a way as will bear the strictest scrutiny. Our finance, in so far as borrowed money is concerned, must rest on sound principles. This expenditure on public buildings, as it is to be taken out of the borrowed money, without providing for its payment within a reasonable time—say within the next fifty years -appears to me not a very satisfactory expenditure. Now, with regard to the proposals for the future, I shall not enter into that phase of the question, partly because, in order to make any observations upon it, one would require to study the Statement; because I do not think that any gentleman sitting in this part of the House was really able to follow the Public Works Minister, on account of the low tone of voice in which he spoke. However, I must say that on the first blush of the policy -for we might almost call it that-I cannot say that I see anything that is very objectionable. But I was not clear upon one or two points. For instance, the honourable gentleman has not told us what he proposes to do with this one-million loan for the North Island Railway. He has told us that he intends soon to commence the line in this direction from Te Awamutu. I presume that he intends paying for this work from the million and a half that he proposes to borrow during the current year. However, the honourable gentleman was not very clear on that point. Then, I think, the honourable gentleman was not very clear either as to the allocation of the loans. He certainly told us the sums of money that were intended to be spent on certain lines, or, rather, he told us the points to which the lines would be taken: but I think it is very desirable that this money should be allocated in the same manner as was done on the occasion of raising the last loan. We all know that the money was not spent as it was allocated. We know that; but that was owing to this oversight: that no provision was made for expenditure on open lines. aware that that was the cause of it, and, like prudent men, we should learn from experience. The purposes for which the money is to be borrowed should be specified in the schedule to the Loan Act. I shall conclude my remarks by quoting the words of the honourable gentleman himself, which I understood him to say were really the sum and substance of the policy; and I hope the words quoted are really the sum and substance of the policy. think that the policy may be acceptable. The words are these: "that they intended going on with public works as fast as, but not faster

than, our means permit." Mr. BRYCE.—I do not rise for the purpose of continuing the debate on the Public Works Statement which has just been made, because I think it would be a very poor compliment indeed to the honourable gentleman to attempt anything of the kind this evening. may say that, on the whole, the Statement delivered by the honourable gentleman has made a favourable impression upon myself. rose partly for the purpose of pointing out that the Statement was one of very unusual importance—important in the respect that it proposes to deal with a larger sum of money annually than has usually been proposed for some years past; important also in the respect that it contains really to some considerable extent a Financial Statement; and it is in other respects of more than average importance. But the occasion is still more important, I think, when we consider that the Premier has himself, in the few short remarks which he read, made a statement of an importance perhaps quite equal to that of the Public Works Statement delivered by my honourable friend the Minister for Public Works. I take it the statement made by the Premier is of the greatest interest to us, and we ought to take time to consider it before attempting to reply to it or deal with it in any way. The honour-able gentleman stated that the railway proposals of the Government ought to be taken as a whole, and that the Government meant them to be so taken, and that any failure to take them in that way might result in another session very shortly, or perhaps in a dissolution. These are the reasons why I think the debate should not be continued just now, and why it should be adjourned in some way. I do not know what the form would be.

Mr. J. W. Thomson

Mr. STOUT.-There is no necessity for the

adjournment of the debate to be moved.
Mr. BRYCE.—I venture to express a hope that the Government will give another opportunity to debate the subject.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—I should deprecate any discussion going on to-night. I submit there will be ample opportunity to discuss the Statement.

Sir G. GREY.—I think there is a desire for an adjournment. The Premier has made a certain important statement, and I think it is very desirable we should consider such a statement.

Mr. STOUT .- I would point out that the position is this: If this motion be carried, when we go into Supply on the Public Works Statement there will be ample opportunity for discussing it, or on the motion to leave the

Mr. BRYCE.—I quite understand it in that way. If the Government express a desire that the discussion should be continued at a convenient opportunity, it is equivalent to an adjournment of the debate.

Sir G. GREY.—I understood the Minister for Public Works was going to close the debate by

making a reply.

Mr. STOUT.—This motion is simply a formal one, binding the House to nothing. It is simply a matter of convenience. The Public Works Statement was made on that motion, which

does not usually give rise to any debate.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—This particular motion was not moved to evoke discussion; but the discussion, if any—as no doubt there will be and ought to be on the figures and policy I have brought down-should take place on the motion for going into Committee of Supply. As far as a reply is concerned, there are only one or two points to which I wish to refer this evening. The honourable member for Waitotara says that the amount proposed to be expended this year is larger than usual. I think he will find, on looking into the figures, that that is hardly correct. If the House is going to be asked to vote a larger amount, it is merely because there are three or four items which are required to be voted to carry out the conditions of the Roads and Bridges Construction and other Acts which have been in force since 1882, and so far no votes taken, amounting to four or five hundred thousand pounds. The only other point I would mention is that referred to by the honourable member for Clutha. The honourable gentleman seemed to take exception to the length of time that had elapsed between the delivery of the Financial Statement and the delivery of the Public Works Statement. I find that in 1879, when a new Government came into office, the Financial Statement was made on the 11th November, and the Public Works Statement on the 9th December. In 1880, when the Government had been in existence for one year, the Financial Statement was made on the 8th June, and the Public Works Statement on the 6th August. In 1881, the Government having been in office for two years, the Financial Statement

was delivered on the 6th July, and the Public Works Statement on the 9th August. In 1882 the Financial Statement was made on the 15th June, and the Public Works Statement on the 11th July. I have not had time to turn up the record of 1883. But this year a new Government came into office on the 1st September, and the Financial Statement was made on the 16th September. Several policy Bills have since been before the House, and now the Public Works Statement has been delivered on the 24th October.

Bankruptcy Bill.

Motion agreed to.

## BANKRUPTCY BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 16.—Landlord's preferential claim to rent limited.

Mr. STOUT moved the addition of the following words: "and he shall not be entitled to more than the value of the goods distrainable as a preferential claim, but may prove for the rent due."

The Committee divided.

#### AYES, 44.

	,	
Barron	McKenzie, J.	Seddon
Bevan	McMillan	Shephard
Brown	Menteath	Smith
Cadman	Moat	Steward, W. J.
Cowan	Montgomery	Stewart, W. D.
Fraser	Moss	Stout
Fulton	Newman	Sutter
Gillies	O'Callaghan	Thompson, T.
Hobbs	O'Conor	Tole
Joyce	Ormond	Trimble
Lance	Peacock	Walker
Levestam	Pyke	Whyte, J. B.
Locke	Reese	Tellers.
Macarthur	Richardson, E.	Guinness
Mackenzie, M.	Samuel	White, W.

NoEs, 7.

Buckland, W.F. Pearson Tellers. Thomson, J.W. Duncan Shrimski. Grigg Hatch

Majority for, 37.

Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to.

## POLICE OFFENCES BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 18.—Penalty for trading, &c., on Sun-

Mr. LEVESTAM moved, That the words, "or plays at any game or pastime in any public place," be struck out.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the words be retained."

#### AYES, 23.

Bruce	McKenzie, J. McMillan	Thompson, T. Thomson, J.W.
Cowan Fraser	Newman	Tole
Fulton	Peacock	Walker
Gillies	Pearson	White, W.
Grigg	Reese	Tellers.
Hakuene	Ross	Hobbs
Hatch	Shephard	Stewart, W. D.

	Noes, 35.	
Ballance	Lake	Pyke ·
Barron	Lance	Richardson, E.
Beetham	Larnach	Richardson, G.
Bevan	Levestam	Shrimski
Brown	Locke	Steward, W. J.
Bryce	Macarthur	Stout
Buchanan	Menteath	Te Ao
Buckland, W.F.	. Moat	Trimble
Dodson	Montgomery	Whyte, J. B.
Fitzherbert	Moss	Tellers.
Guinness	O'Callaghan	O'Conor
Joyce	Ormond	Seddon.
	D	

Police Offences Bill.

For. Against. Macandrew. Mackenzie, M. Majority against, 12.

Words struck out.

Mr. SEDDON moved, That the following words—"or gold-mining, or pastoral, or agricultural operations"—be inserted, with a view to exempting these from the operation of the. clause.

The Committee divided.

## AYES, 24.

Ballance	Macarthur	Samuel
Beetham	Mackenzie, M.	Steward, W. J.
Bevan	Menteath	Stout
BBradshaw	Montgomery	Trimble
Buchanan	O'Callaghan	Walker.
Grigg	O'Conor	Tellers.
Joyce	Pyke	Levestam
Lance	Richardson, G.	Seddon.
Locke	•	

	Noes, 28.	
Barron	Hobbs	Taiaroa
Bruce	McKenzie, J.	Thompson, T.
Buckland, W.F	.McMillan	Thomson, J. W.
Dodson	Moss	Tole
Fitzherbert	Newman	White, W.
Fraser	Pere	Whyte, J. B.
Fulton	Reese	• •
Gillies	Shephard	Tellers.
Hakuene	Stewart, W. D.	Lake
Hatch	Sutter	Peacock.
10.	Faiarity against	4

Majority against, 4.

Amendment negatived. The Committee divided on the question. "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

## AYES, 33.

Barron	McKenzie, J.	Stout
Bruce	McMillan	Sutter
Buckland, W.F	. Montgomery	Thompson, T.
Cadman	Moss	Thomson, J. W.
Fergus ·	Newman	Tole
Fraser	Pearson	Walker
Gillies	Pere	White, W.
Grigg	Reese	Whyte, J. B.
Hakuene	Shephard	Tellers.
Hatch	Steward, W. J.	Fulton
Hobbs	Stewart, W. D.	Peacock.
Lake	•	

## Noes. 20.

Ballance	Buchanan	Lance
Bevan	Dodson	Levestam
BBradshaw	Joyce	Macarthur

[Ocr. 27

Mackenzie, M. Pyke Trimble.

Menteath Richardson, G. Tellers.

Moat Seddon O'Conor

O'Callaghan Shrimski Samuel.

PAIR.

For. Macandrew. Against.
Te Ao.

Majority for, 13.

Clause retained.

Mr. SEDDON moved, That the Chairman leave the chair.

The Committee divided.

AYES, 2.

Tellers. Levestam

Seddon.

Noes, 49.

Ballance Lake Samuel Beetham Lance Sheph**ard** Bevan Mackenzie, M. Shrimski Steward, W. J. Stewart, W. D. Bruce McKenzie, J. Buchanan McMillan Buckland, W.F. Menteath Stout Cadman Moat Sutter Dodson Montgomery Thompson, T. Fergus Moss Thomson, J. W. Newman Fraser Tole Fulton O'Callaghan Trimble O'Conor Gillies White, W. Grigg Peacock Whyte, J. B.  $\mathbf{H}$ akuene Pearson Hatch Pere Tellers. Hobbs Reese Barron Joyce Richardson, G. Walker. Majority against, 47.

Motion negatived.

Clause 22.—Penalty for exposure of person

or grossly indecent acts.

Mr. SEDDON moved, That there be struck out the latter part of the clause, providing that flogging should be one of the penalties.

The Committee divided on the question,

"That the subsection be retained."

AYES, 22.

Boetham McMillan Trimble Fraser Moat Walker Gillies Newman White, W. Peacock -Grigg Whyte, J. B. Hakuene Pere Hatch Steward, W. J. Tellers.Hobbs Buchanan Lake Thompson, T. O'Callaghan. Nozs, 13.

Ballance Reese Tole.

Barron Richardson, G.
Buckland, W.F. Seddon Tellers.
Joyce Stout Bevan

Levestam Thomson, J. W. Moss.

Majority for, 9.

Subsection retained.

Bill reported, with amendments.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes to two o'clock a.m.

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Monday, 27th October, 1884.

First Readings—Third Readings—Punishments for Offences in Gaols—Government Policy Measures—East and West Coast (Middle Island) and Nelson Railway and Railways Construction Bill—Drainage of Mines Bill—Public Works Amendment Bill.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READINGS.

Municipal Corporations Bill, Destitute Persons Bill.

THIRD READINGS.

Trustees, Executors, and Agency Company Bill, Fisheries Conservation Bill, Waikato Confiscated Lands Bill.

PUNISHMENTS FOR OFFENCES IN GAOLS.

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL said he would not ask the Hon. the Colonial Secretary the question of which he had given notice, Whether, in the opinion of the Government, the present arrangements for punishing offences of prisoners under sentence in the gaols of the colony are sufficient to prevent the recurrence of such punishments as were formerly inflicted, notably in Dunedin, under the authority of Visiting Justices? Since giving notice of the question he had been informed that one honourable gentleman was desirous of speaking on the subject, and, in order to give him an opportunity of bringing the matter forward in whatever manner he pleased to adopt to insure its free discussion, he (Mr. Mantell) would abstain from putting the question.

The Hon. Captain FRASER rose to say that he had intimated to the Hon. Mr. Mantell that he might take whatever course he liked, and that he (Captain Fraser) should take his own He moved the adjournment of the Council in order to state that the Hon. Mr. Mantell had no warrant for what he had said. He did not for a moment think that the courteous and gentlemanly tone of the question which the Hon. Mr. Mantell had flying in the Order Paper for many days was the reply to a question which he had asked in the Council, as they all knew he was overflowing with the milk of human kindness. He could only come to the conclusion that the Hon. Mr. Mantell, like himself, was getting old, and his memory was failing. He saw by Hansard that the honourable gentleman was in the Council on the 9th September, 1881; and he might have heard on that occasion the Hon. Mr. Whitaker introduce a Prisons Bill; and the honourable gentlemen present on that occa-sion would recollect that this occurred:—

"The Hon. Captain France expressed a hope that greater powers would be conferred upon Captain Hume than that gentleman appeared to possess at the present time. . . . He also desired to point out that there was a clause

in the present Act giving power to Visiting | Justices to keep a prisoner in gaol a year longer than the term of his sentence. Thus, if a Judge sentenced a prisoner to five years' imprison-ment, it was in the power of the Visiting Justices to retain him for six years for repeated infractions of prison regulations. He did not think it proper that such a clause should be permitted to exist. It was acted upon in this colony; but he hoped to see a limit put to it by an Order of the Governor in Council."

He believed that it was in consequence of that suggestion that a limit was put to that power. He had visited the best gaols in Eng-land and Ireland, and he found that not in one of them was any man ever kept one day longer than his sentence, whatever his conduct might

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN was sorry to interrupt the honourable gentleman, but desired to ask the Speaker's ruling if this discussion was

not somewhat irregular. The Hon. the SPEAKER said there was no doubt that the honourable member was strictly in order; but it was his (the Speaker's) duty to point out to the Council that the privilege of moving the adjournment of the Council in order to talk on all sorts of subjects was a great one, and one that should very rarely be exercised. He could not rule the honourable gentleman out of order, but he would ask the Council to support him, because, if this privilege was too much indulged in, it would cause very great inconvenience.

The Hon. Captain FRASER said the Hon. Mr. Mantell had informed him that it was reported that he (Captain Fraser) had left the colony to avoid being present at the Commission ap-pointed to inquire into the proceedings at the gaol. He asked who said that, and the Hon. Mr. Mantell said, "People outside Parliament." He (Captain Fraser) replied that, if the honourable gentleman's acquaintances outside were of that description, he could not compliment him upon his acquaintances.

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL said the honourable gentleman would excuse the interruption, but he desired to say that the conversation was new to him, excepting that he did tell the honourable gentleman that there were people foolish enough to circulate that report, and that he (Mr. Mantell) did not believe it; but the reflection the honourable gentleman fancied he had made upon his (Mr. Mantell's) associates

did not reach his ears on the occasion. The Hon. Captain FRASER said the members of the Cabinet were in Dunedin shortly before he left New Zealand, and he was in communication with them, but heard nothing of this Commission; and Major Atkinson told him he would write to the Agent-General to facilitate his (Captain Fraser's) visiting of the reformatories. He left New Zealand for the purpose of consulting an oculist, and had he not done so he would probably now have been blind, so that whoever spread the report had no warrant for it. Before he went Home, he had endeavoured to assist Captain Hume in the work he had to perform, and had

told him that he was almost tired of the gaol. The report of paid subordinates, he thought, was very much the same as an audit report cooked to order; and, immediately he heard that such a Commission had sat in his absence, he determined to send in his resignation: he could not remain a Visiting Justice under a person in whom he had no confidence, and for whom he had no respect. Captain Hume had said to him more than once, "I wish that you would resign, as I could then easily deal with the other Visiting Justices." He could say that since the inquiry a great change had taken place. work of the prisoners was once estimated to be worth more than that of ordinary navvies; but now it was worth nothing, as warders were afraid to report prisoners. He asked to withdraw his motion for adjournment.

Offences in Gaols.

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL objected to the withdrawal of the motion until he had said a few words. The honourable gentleman had taken an entirely wrong view of the matter.

He had no doubt read the report.

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—I have never

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL would advise the Hon. Captain Fraser to read it, and then he would probably take some course regard-ing it. He would see that he (Mr. Mantell) was entirely free from the suspicion with which he was charged; and he (the Hon. Captain Fraser) would probably move for the production of papers to give him an opportunity of meeting the hints in the report in a more satisfactory manner than they had been met up to the present moment. The Commissioners stated that the reason for not making a recommendation was owing to the absence of one gentleman, who had not had an opportunity of being heard; and added,-

"We believe the adoption of the suggestions. contained in the report will render a repetition of such abuses impossible. But for that, we should feel constrained to recommend His Excellency to remove those gentlemen from the position of Visiting Justices."

He thought he might be pardoned for desiring to know if the anticipations of the Com-mission had been realized. He would not put his question, but would strongly advise the Hon. Captain Fraser, in the first place, not to misunderstand him—not to mistake his motivesbut to read the report, and take such steps as he might then think advisable.

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—I say, " Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes."

GOVERNMENT POLICY MEASURES. The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Before proceeding to the Orders of the Day, I should like

to ask the Hon. the Colonial Secretary a question. In the other branch of the Legislature an important Ministerial statement has been made regarding the conduct of the business of Parliament. It is usual, when an important statement of that character is made, for some reference to be made to it by the Ministerial leader in this branch of the Legislature. wish to inquire from my honourable friend if he has any statement to make in the Council of the same character, or in connection with the statement made in the other branch of the Legislature.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I am not aware what statement the honourable gentle-

man refers to.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE. — It is an important Ministerial statement that appears, from the Press, to have been made by the Hon. the Premier, and based upon a written or printed document the Premier held in his hand at the time.

The Hon. Mr. BUCKLEY.—To what effect? The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE .-- I presume, in that case, the question has not been con-

sidered in the Cabinet.

EAST AND WEST COAST (MIDDLE ISLAND) AND NELSON RAILWAY AND RAILWAYS CONSTRUCTION BILL.

On the motion for going into Committee on

this Bill,

The Hon. Mr. WILSON said,—I do not want to raise a discussion on the merits of this Bill: that is not desirable at this stage; but I want to call the attention of the Colonial Secretary to this point: I have looked through this Bill, and I am bound to say I cannot see why all these borrowing clauses — from clause 10 to clause 18, with the exception of the 12th clause are introduced. I think this is a convenient time to state my objections. The Council will see that any company that proceeds under the authority of this Bill will have to incorporate itself in some form or other under the law of New Zealand, by registering itself under the Companies Act, or by forming itself under some similar Act in England, and in that case all these powers will necessarily have to be inserted in their articles of incorporation. fail to see at all why, in an Act under which the colony declines to accept liabilities of any kind, these clauses should be introduced. What purpose will be served by these clauses, which impose certain restrictions on the com-pany? What purpose will be served by the clause restricting the interest to 6 per cent.? I do not know what right we have to say that they shall borrow money at 6 per cent. They might have to borrow at a much higher rate. The line, I think, will be either a total failure or a great success, and in either event it is of very little moment at what rate the money is borrowed. I do not see why we should apparently exercise a jurisdiction over them in compelling them to observe certain forms: it is a matter with which we have nothing All that is supposed to be whatever to do. given by this Bill is the title to certain grants of land. That is the whole Bill; and I cannot help thinking that it is a dangerous thing to interfere with the machinery they think proper for carrying out their purposes, when, in truth, we have really nothing to do with it. compel them to do many things which they may find very burdensome, and I cannot help thinking that, by assuming the right to this jurisdiction, it will be said the colony has taken

Hon. Mr. Waterhouse

some liability. I should like to hear the reason why these clauses have been inserted, because, if there is an absolutely good reason given, that will save time hereafter, when these clauses are considered in Committee.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND .- In order to avoid general discussion in Committee, I will state that I intend to move an amendment in clause 4, to strike out the words, "by the Arthur's Pass route." The words that have been inserted in this Bill since it was introduced by the Government have caused much disappointment and anxiety among people who are connected with one part of the scheme, the Nelson and West Coast line. The connections of the railway are less convenient by this Arthur's Pass, and they fail to do what it is supposed the other Pass will do; they fail to admit of the connection by way of what is known in Parliament as the central route; they fail to admit of the connection of the West Coast direct with Nelson, Marlborough, and Wellington, which would be effected if the Lewis Pass were adopted. I think that in the interests of the company—if such a company should be floated—it is very undesirable that a limitation should be put into a Bill of this kind. It should be left to the company to choose the route most likely to be profitable. It seems a very unwise limitation to cut them off from what they may think the most profitable route, and one which may be the best for the colony at large, though not, perhaps, for one particular part of it. I do not intend to go fully into the subject, but I think it right to put these few remarks on record, and I hope the Government will take them seriously into consideration.

Motion agreed to.

## IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 5 .- Governor may contract to take over and work railway, in consideration of re-

ceiving portions of gross traffic receipts.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE moved, That

the clause be struck out.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the clause be retained."

### AYES, 10.

Bonar Dignan Reeves Brett Lahmann Reynolds Buckley, P. A. Ngatata Williamson. Campbell

#### Noes, 23.

Johnson, G. R. Pharazyn Acland Barnicoat Johnston, J. Pollen Brandon McLean Richmond, J. C. Miller Waterhouse Chamberlin Whitmore Fraser Nurse Oliver Wigley Grace Wilson. Hart Peacock Peter Henderson

Majority against, 13.

Clause struck out. Bill reported, with amendments.

DRAINAGE OF MINES BILL. The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said it was a short Bill for the purpose of altering the provisions of sections 71 and 75 of the Mines Act. It appeared that, where mines had been flooded, and their drainage had been undertaken, it had been found impossible to enforce the law, and it was now proposed to introduce two clauses and repeal the old ones. That was the whole scope of the Bill, which was purely a machinery Bill, for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of the Mines Act.

Bill read a second time.

PUBLIC WORKS AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said the Bill was introduced for the purpose of amending the Act of 1883. There were certain provisions in it which were merely departmental provisions; but it was considered desirable that the Statute Book should not be incumbered, and that the Act of 1883 should be repealed, and its provisions enacted again, with the alterations which the department found necessary for carrying the mere details of office into execution. The Bill was of a very simple nature, being the Act of 1883 with some amendments which were practically of an unimportant character, to which he would call attention when in Committee.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE said that, although the amendments proposed in the Bill, as the Colonial Secretary had said, were of an unimportant character, the Bill itself introduced a somewhat novel and, he thought, a dangerous provision, to which he would call the attention of his honourable friend. If honourable members would look into it they would see that the effect of the Bill was to invest the Minister for Public Works for the time being—a political officer—with very important judicial functions. It was in that respect that the Bill appeared to initiate a novel and, he considered, an objectionable change in the law. Whenever there was, be-tween two boroughs, a dispute with reference to the maintenance of a road that was common property, there was power of appeal to the Resident Magistrate, who decided upon the merits of the case; but when a more important principle was at stake—when a dispute existed with regard to the maintenance of a road between two districts or counties, or regarding the maintenance of a bridge, ferry, or ford-instead of Courts of law being resorted to, the Minister was to be endowed with judicial functions to settle these disputes, without any right of appeal, and without any provisions regarding the mode in which he was to take evidence. This, he thought, was a very objectionable provision. There was no doubt that a Minister, whoever he might be—and the Minister for Public Works especially—would be subject to political pressure, and to local pressure; and he thought that the Minister was therefore the last person who should be endowed with these judicial functions. He hoped that, before the Bill was in Committee, his honourable friend would direct his attention to this, and

he had no doubt that, with that desire to maintain the impartiality of the law which always characterized him, he would introduce amendments into the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

The Council adjourned at twenty minutes past eight o'clock p.m.

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Monday, 27th October, 1884.

First Reading—Second Reading—Third Reading—Bill discharged—Government Policy Measures—Police Offences Bill—Land Bill.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READING. City Electorates Bill.

SECOND READING. Road Boards Bill.

THIRD READING. Police Offences Bill.

BILL DISCHARGED. Cruelty to Animals Bill.

GOVERNMENT POLICY MEASURES. Sir G. GREY.—Sir, before the Orders of the Day are called on, I beg to move the adjournment of the House. I am anxious to bring under the consideration of the House a statement which was made by the Premier on Friday night, immediately after the Minister for Public Works had made his Public Works Statement. I make this motion because I presume some explanation will be given by the Premier in regard to the meaning of his statement. I can only at present say that it was with feelings of pain and regret that I heard such a statement made, and that the impression left on my mind was that it really does threaten the freedom of debate in this House, that it was totally uncalled for, and that Parliament had done nothing to deserve a reproach of that kind; and I do think, on the other hand, that we, as a Parliament, should not allow it to be said that a Government will not permit us or suffer us to take such a line of action as we think proper. I say solemnly that, as far as I understand what has passed in Parliament, nothing whatever has transpired to justify the language in which the proceedings of Parliament were described in the statement. I leave the matter in the hands of the House, hoping that the Government will make such an explanation as will render all further proceedings unnecessary.

Mr. STOUT.—I understood, from the "Hear, hears" with which this motion was greeted, that some other honourable member had something to say on the matter.

Major ATKINSON.—We want to hear your!

explanation first.
Mr. STOUT.—I should like the honourable member to state what explanation he desires. It is perfectly well known to him what the statement refers to. He himself was one of the first to announce in the House that he thought the Government had not a majority in another place; and he seemed rather to glory in the fact that one of the policy Bills of the Government had been thrown out in the Council. The statement has reference to that. As far as I am concerned—and I presume I am speaking for the Government—the Government are not going to remain on these benches simply to register Appropriation Acts, and allow their policy Bills to be interfered with in another place. They must either resign their seats, or else take some other means to ascertain the feeling of the country. It is absurd to suppose that the Ministry will allow another Chamber, composed as that Chamber is, to do what it pleases with reference to the Government policy. I do not wish, upon a motion of this kind, to reflect upon the other Chamber or upon individual members of it, though I would observe, if the reports of what is said in the other Chamber are correct, one of the members of the late Government seems to be unable to rise in his place on any occasion without making a personal attack upon myself—even upon this very question of the district railways, though he was the last person who should have made a debate on that measure the occasion for making personal reflections. If he had any proper feeling with regard to his past action, he should not have made any such references, he being a gentleman who, in order to appear pure before Parliament and the country, forced the Waimea Plains Railway Company to buy back his shares at par, although they were not selling in the market at par. His action is certainly rather peculiar. However, I will not criticise his action in that respect, or any of the re-marks made; but I must say that it was perfectly plain to my mind—and, I believe, plain not only to the Government, but to a majority of the House—that there was an intention on the part of the other branch of the Legislature to carry measures that were only beneficial to one part of the colony. And that is more apparent if we consider the constitution of that body. Any one who looks at the constitution of the Legislative Council will see that there is a preponderance of members in it from one district. For example, if the Legislative Council were to be constituted on a population basisthat is to say, if representatives were to be appointed from various districts; and I think that would be a fair basis—if we were to have equal representation of other parts of the colony as compared with Wellington in the Legislative Council, there would be 130 or 140 members in that Chamber. What the Government stated is, I apprehend, what any Government would have stated; and, when they know that another Chamber is going to throw out all their policy Bills, they must consider what is to be done. I

same thing much more strongly than we did. I do not think any further explanation is

necessary.

Colonel TRIMBLE.—It seems to me that the announcement made by the Prime Minister the other day was one peculiarly arbitrary in its character. It was simply this: "You shall take what we say are policy Bills, and those Bills must be passed exactly as we wish them, or either we go at once to the country by way of dissolution, or, after a short adjournment, you will be brought here again; thus breaking your private arrangements." I am not going to make a speech on the subject; but the honourable gentleman's conduct reminds me very much of the position that the master of a school I attended in my young days assumed. He was a very excellent teacher; but he never forgot his position - the position of master; and I remember very well that, when he took up his cane, and struck the rostrum, exclaiming, "Silence, you pups!" we shook in our shoes, and were very silent indeed. And it struck me that the words of the Premier the other night were very like those of my excellent friend and old schoolmaster—"Silence, you pups!"
Mr. BRYCE.—The explanation given by the

Premier has not, I think, been very complete, or possibly the original statement was complete enough without the explanation. But I think it would have been interesting, at all events, if the Premier and the Government have such strong objections to the Legislative Council exercising its undoubted privilege of rejecting Bills, to hear how they propose to remedy that. The Premier declares that the Government will

not suffer it.

Mr. STOUT .-- I did not say that. I said the Government would not remain in their seats. The Legislative Council may form a Ministry if it likes.

Mr. BRYCE.—If this is a correct copy of what the Premier said, the following words were spoken by him: "I will go further-

Mr. STOUT.—I am speaking of what I said

to-day.

Mr. BRYCE.—I am speaking of what the honourable gentleman said on Friday. The honourable member declared that the Government would not suffer certain things to be done; and I say it would have been interesting if to-day he had explained the means which he intended to adopt in order to prevent the Legislative Council from exercising its undoubted privilege of rejecting Bills. It was on that point that I think his explanation was not complete enough. For my part, I am always ready to maintain the privileges of this House; but, on the other hand, I have not the least intention of attempting to impair the privileges of any other part of the Legislative Assembly. If the Government are going to attempt to impair the privileges of another place, I should very much like to know how they propose to do it; and possibly, since the Premier has failed to explain that, some other member of the Government will explain it, because it will certainly be a matter of very submit that other Governments have put the great interest. If he is going to bring it about

by punishing us, that is most unfortunate. I am sure that we have been humble enough. The honourable member cannot complain of us in that respect. We have been carrying the Government measures by large majorities, and -I am speaking of the House collectively, not of myself particularly—we have been as subservient to the honourable member as we possibly could be. But, because some other body has offended him, or does that which he does not want, it appears to me that he is not going to punish that other body, but intends to punish us. He is either going to bring us back here in a few months, at a time of great inconvenience — to inflict on us great loss, punishment, and distress-or he is going to send us back to the country, when one-half of us will not be re-elected. That is cruel of the honourable member. He has undoubtedly a giant's power, but surely we may ask him not to exercise that power as a giant. He should be a little more merciful to us. As the honourable member for Auckland East said, he ought to allow us freedom of debate, and ought not to hold out those terrible threats of punishment, because another body has committed some wickedness, for which we are not

responsible. Mr. LEVESTAM.—I must say I do not quite understand the explanation the Premier has given. He says, if measures are thrown out in another Chamber, he must consider what steps he will take. Now, one measure has been thrown out in another place, but the honourable gentlemen on the Government benches have given notice that they will bring forward resolutions dealing with the same subject in this House. If I understood aright the statement the other night, it is a threat to us that we must pass those resolutions or else put up with the consequences. That is how, I believe, it has been generally understood. The honourable gentleman says that, if the other Chamber were put on a population basis, the southern part of the colony would have a very great number of members there; but I fail to see how he assumes that the other Chamber should be nominated on a population basis. We have nothing whatever to that effect, as far as I am aware, in the Constitution Act or anywhere else. As I understand it, the other Chamber is there to check hasty legislation, and it appears to me that the particular measure thrown out in the other Chamber was essentially hasty legislation, because the Government has failed to supply the House or the country with any data on which to form conclusions. It is not stated how many of those ratepayers are pro-

Mr. STOUT.-Mr. Speaker, is it in order to

discuss this question?

Mr. SPEAKER.—On a motion for adjournment there is no limitation except as to discussing business on the Paper. The honourable member is not exceeding his privilege.

Mr. STOUT.—He is anticipating resolutions

now on the Paper.

Mr. SPEAKER.—No. He is referring to a measure rejected in another place.

Mr. LEVESTAM.—I am simply speaking on the question of adjournment, and replying to what the Premier stated. The other Chamber is there to check hasty legislation, and I consider this measure was a piece of hasty legislation. I do not know that this is a measure which the country has demanded, nor yet do I believe that the country had the slightest inkling of what the Government was about to bring forward. Therefore I do not think the other Chamber has exceeded its functions in rejecting what might very well wait for another session.

Mr. PYKE.—It seems to me that no Government can carry on if measures of great policy, or to which they attach great importance, are thrown out without due consideration or without any consideration. I am not at all surprised at the attitude assumed by the Government, although I am at the remedy proposed. To threaten a dissolution of this House in order to punish the other branch of the Legislature seems to be a curious way of administering vicarious punishment. It simply means making a present of a second honorarium to the Legislative Council. That would be the effect of it. I, for one, quite indorse the view of this question taken by the Premier of England. He objects to dissolve the House of Commons, on the ground that the action of the superior branch of the Legislature should not have the effect of dissolving the Lower Chamber; and I think it would be a great mistake here if any such measure were resorted to. That is the whole argument of the Premier of England, as set forth in his recent Midlothian speech on the very question of policy now being discussed here. To prorogue the Parliament, and hold a short session to specially bring forward any such measures of policy, would, I think, be a wise and statesmanlike course to take. Then, if those measures are carried in that special session, and the other branch of the Legislature chooses to throw them out again, the matter may become very serious. I do not look upon it at the present time as so serious as the Government seem to think it. There is a third course—there always is a third course in these cases—one which I think honourable members on the Treasury benches might have no difficulty in acceding to. That is, to carry out an equalization of the representation of different parts of the colony, and place a number of members in the Council who would fairly and fitly represent the various provincial districts of New Zealand, which are not now properly represented there. It is well worthy of consideration whether, if that is done, we should not have measures fairly and carefully considered. I quite agree with the stand the Government have taken, and I hope they will not recede from it.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I wish to say a few words before this motion is withdrawn. It seems to me that the remarks made by the Premier the other evening were so easily to be understood that I cannot at all comprehend how any one can profess to feel a difficulty in understanding them. Our colleague, the Minister for Public

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Works, had come down with proposals which embraced, it is true, a large part of the country, but pre-eminent among which were the North Island Trunk Railway and other works for the good of this Island. Now, it had been borne in upon the Government by various circumstances—I do not like specifically to refer to another place — that there is a very startling element of selfishness still to be found in particular districts; and the Government saw that it might be committed, in its disposition to act cordially and without any reservation, to express its entire approbation and approval of works which would have the effect of entirely transforming this Island from its present comparatively unsettled and uncolonized condition into the most thriving colony, probably, in the Empire. The Government found itself placed in this position: that the session might end, and the Middle Island might find that, whilst all this had been done for the North Island, absolutely nothing was being done for the Middle Island. It is one thing for the Government to adopt such a policy, and it is another thing for the Government to be forced, by the selfishness of others, into a defensive policy; and my honourable colleague thought it necessary to state this: that the various proposals of the Government embraced features having for their object the good of the whole colony. The Government did not take office for the purpose of occupying these seats without doing justice to themselves and justice to the colony; and they felt that, whatever might be their own convenience and the convenience of honourable members, their duty to the country was paramount to all other considerations, whatever personal sacrifices were entailed. The Government wished it to be distinctly understood that they would not consider it a satisfactory session. or one of which they could approve, if the measures of the Government were dealt with in so partial a manner that, while one Island would complain that nothing had been done for it, the inhabitants of the other Island might be profuse in their expressions that nothing more could be wanted. And the Government folt this: that, without making any reference that might be held to have too specific a meaning, it was well honourable members should understand their policy was not a piecemeal one; and, whatever the inconvenience and expense of another session—even if it entailed the inconvenience and expense of an appeal to the constituencies—the Government would consider it necessary to push through the policy they have brought down this session, which, in so many words, is a revival of the colonizing policy that has been abandoned for some years. They considered it necessary to bring that before the country, and to use all legitimate authority at their command to see that policy carried out. How that can interfere with the freedom of debate I am at a loss to understand; and I am also at a loss to understand what reason honourable members who support the Government, or who wish to see colonizing operations throughout the whole colony pursued to advantage, can complain

Sir J. Voqel

of the statement that was made. ter for Public Works having stated generally the policy of the Government, and seeing that there was this fear of our drifting into a result that would be unsatisfactory to the country, it was necessary for the Government to point out that the various propositions of the Government hang together, and to show this House and the country that they were mindful of the circumstances, conditions, and wants of all parts of the country, and that they were not willing to see continued a practice-to which I shall not further allude-which allowed some parts of the country to sink into depression whilst other parts were favoured at their ex-There is no man in this House who takes a less local view of these matters than I do, as is well known, for I have represented constituencies in all parts of the colony, and have never taken a narrow local view, to the exclusion of the colonial view. But there is a limit within which one must make a stand; and, seeing, as we did, a danger of our drifting into a position which would be unsatisfactory to a large portion of the colony, and the most populous part of the colony, it became necessary for us to make the declaration which my honourable friend made the other evening, and which, I think, could not be misunderstood by those who desired to understand it. As regards a short session, I am sure none could desire it more than a Government in office. If honourable members have to work hard, how much harder have not the members of the Government to work! They have to snatch, so to speak, moments for discussing their policy from the ordinary hours of business, already fully occupied with the routine of the business of the House. As I previously remarked, we did not take an adjournment after taking office, but, with a desire to suit the convenience of honourable members, we went on with the business at once. But, however much we might desire a short session, we could not be unmindful of the fact that it is not our convenience or the personal convenience of honourable members that we have to consider first, because each of us has first to consider, as the Government and honourable members I am sure have done, his duty to the country. We took office at the time of a very grave emergency—at a time when the interests of the colony wanted not passive but active attention; and we should be ill performing our duties if we were to allow any considerations whatever to induce us to neglect that attention to the wants of the colony which, in our opinion, was so impera-tively demanded. We shall be able to discuss this question more fully on another occasion; but my honourable colleague and myself think there should be no doubt in the minds of honourable members as to what is the meaning of the Government. That meaning is, that their attention is devoted equally to all interests and to all parts of the colony, and they cannot consent to be made the medium through which one part of the colony can be favoured at the expense of the other.

Mr. BARRON.—I confess I have great diffi-

culty in understanding the speech of the Colonial Treasurer. It seems that this statement of the Premier was made to the House as a result of the action of the Legislative Council in throwing out the District Railways Bill. The Treasurer has now told us that it is absolutely necessary, in the interests of both parts of the colony, that certain measures, which the Government hold as part of their policy, should be given effect to. But it seems unfortunately injudicious that the Legislative Council should be found fault with and accused of taking an insular and merely local view of their policy on this District Railways Bill. What is that Bill? If it was a measure which was even remotely likely to confer on the Middle Island any part of that great increase of prosperity the Government claim for their policy, one could easily understand the objection which the Government have taken to the action of the Legislative Council; but this District Railways Bill is a measure brought in to relieve certain wealthy shareholders and ratepayers from burdens which they undertook with their eyes open, and to impose burdens on the general taxpayers which it is absolutely unfair that the Government should ask them to bear. taxpayers should not be called upon to relieve these proprietors of unprofitable railways which they constructed for their own advantage and to improve the value of their lands; neither should they be called upon to relieve ratepayers who knowingly entered upon lands subject to special taxation by the railway companies. confess that I have not the slightest sympathy with the action the Government have taken. The Legislative Council acted within their undoubted constitutional rights in throwing out this Bill, which is one which personally, and even as a Middle Island representative, I certainly object to. I maintain that I am here as a representative of the people of the colony, not of any particular interests or private companies; and, speaking as a representative of the people, I say this Bill which the Legislative Council has objected to is an exceedingly objectionable measure; and I sympathize very much with the action which the Legislative Council has taken in saving this House from hasty if not pernicious legislation. The Government have got it within their power to alter or change the Constitution of the Legislative Council, should they find that the constitutional rights and privileges conferred upon them are not conducive to good government; and that is the proper and legitimate way to meet any objections they may have to the action taken by the Legislative Council. But that the Government should object, in the way they have done, to the constitutional action which the Council has thought fit to take in the best interests of the people, as against private interests, is, I maintain, unworthy of it.

Mr. GRIGG.—I was very much startled at the statement made by the Premier the other evening, and with regard to the position now taken up—not only with regard to what was said the other evening, but at the attitude which the Government have taken on this question. What is placed before the House I. cannot distinctly allude to now, and the explanation which has fallen from the Premier and the Colonial Treasurer has made it far worse, I think. We are talking as if the Legislative Council was a representative body; but that is not the case. That body exists as a judicial body rather than a representative body. Therefore the attempt to bring this matter forward again in the way proposed, by a sidewind, and at the same time to bring such pressure to bear upon the House, is, I think, very objectionable. I think it is also extremely objec-tionable to charge the Legislative Council, as tionable. the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer has done, with selfishness in coming to their conclusion. think we have no right whatever to take up that ground. Surely we should admit that, in a matter in which there was great difference of opinion in this House, members of the Legislative Council might take the same view as those who were opposed to the measure in this House. Surely we might as well say, in regard to those who opposed the measure here, that selfishness alone guided them. I think the action of the Government extremely unjustifiable. It seems to me also very unjustifiable that the Ministry should, at this particular time, tell this House that, unless honourable members accept all their measures in globo, as it were, they will either appeal to the country or do something else. I must say that I was very much startled by that statement. cannot but think the Government are making use of what is a very strong desire in this House on the part of individual members—that is, to get away. They are very anxious, for various reasons, that the session should be at an end, and the Government, by the threat held out by the reading of that statement the other evening, were making a very unfair use of that feeling. With regard to the statement of the Colonial Treasurer, that they were forced to come to the conclusion they had done—that they objected to being placed in such a position that they could not encourage the prosecution of public works in all districts alike-I think it is very early for them to take up that position, as, so far as I am aware, only one of their policy Bills has been rejected. It shows irritation, and the Government assumes an unjustifiable position in making such a statement to this House. I must say that my feeling, hearing the words that fell from the Colonial Treasurer, is that it was a very good thing that the Colonial Treasurer was here to explain the statement made by the Premier; but which explanation are we to accept?

Mr. SMITH.—The honourable member for Wakanui seems to find fault with the Government for their action, as it is likely to delay the business, and honourable members want to get home. It is our business to see, before we go home, that the measures required by the country are passed. Without saying anything now in favour of the District Railways Bill, there is one point which I think had a great effect on the Government in bringing this matter forward. It is this: The first Bill brought

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before the Council they threw out immediately, refusing the Government what has always been given in the past—time for its consideration in that Chamber. That clearly showed that they were prepared to throw out all the Government policy Bills; and there is no question but what the Government had to take a stand. Whether the District Railways Bill was a good one or not has nothing to do with the ques-tion. This House passed it by a large majority. Other Bills may be passed by this House by a large majority, and the other House may throw them out. It would then be too late for the Government to take action. Honourable members would then be found saying that the Government ought to have taken up the question after the throwing-out of the first Bill, and that then they would not have found themselves in the position of having all their policy Bills thrown out. Now, that is the real reason why the Government brought forward this resolution. The Upper House threw out the measure passed by this House, without giving it fair consideration. We know what has happened in the past with regard to measures sent up to the Legislative Council. Take, for instance, the Elective Land Board Bill of the honourable member for Auckland East. They would hardly look at it; they threw it out at once, without any consideration whatever. I believe there was a great difficulty in getting any gentleman to take charge of it at all. It was contemptuously kicked about, and it was not until after some days that any honourable member would take charge of it. That Chamber does not give the measures passed in this House the fair consideration to which they are entitled. It was quite right that the Government of this country should put its foot down and not stand this sort of thing. We must make a change; the country demands it. A strong feeling was expressed in almost every electorate that the present constitution of the Upper House was not a fair one, and that they had not in the past behaved towards the people as they ought to have done. I hope the House will support the Government in this matter. The honourable member for Caversham and other honourable members desire to see liberal measures passed; but what do they see? When liberal measures reach the Upper House they are thrown out at once. The principle is the thing to be considered, and the principle upon which the Legislative Council acts is not a good one.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—The Colonial Treasurer took up a most remarkable position this afternoon when he stated that the Bills brought in by the Government this session were the only measures of a colonizing policy that have been brought forward for some years. When he further stated that the North Island Trunk Railway Bill was a proposal which was going to make the North Island the most prosperous colony of the Empire, whilst at the same time the corresponding proposals of the Government in regard to the Middle Island were not allowed to pass, any one might have gathered from the honourable gentleman's remarks that

this was the first occasion on which the North Island Trunk Railway was proposed to Parliament. Why, I understand that that question was decided in 1882—that it was then proposed that the North Island Trunk Railway should be made; and at the same time proposals were made for large expenditure in other parts of the colony. The balance was struck then, not now. When, the other day, the question of referring the subject of the route to a Committee was first brought up in this House, and I incidentally observed that I thought the whole question was worthy of reconsideration, I was told immediately, principally by gentlemen from the North, that the question had been absolutely and finally settled in 1882, and that it was an honourable understanding between the Middle Island members and the North Island members that the North Island Trunk Railway was to be made in consideration of the expenditure of the Three-Million Loan in the Middle Island. Well, the balance was struck then. What has been done by the Government this session has merely been in continuation of what was done at that time by the Government and the House. For the honourable gentleman to tell us that he and his Ministry have proposed this great boon to the North Island, and that he is going to make corresponding provision for the Middle Island, is an extremely cool attitude for him to take up. I must say, for my own part, I cannot admit that it is sound policy that, whenever a public work is made in one part of the colony, a corresponding loan expenditure is to take place in another. That has been at the bottom of the wasteful extravagance which has deprived the honourable gentleman's public works policy of a great part of its benefit to New Zealand. It has been used as an instrument for procuring the most reckless expenditure. For the honourable gentleman to tell us that this is the very essence of his policy, and that our Constitution is to be strained in order to carry out that policy, shows, I must say, a very deplorable state of affairs. I will go further than that, and I will say that I cannot agree with him in thinking that gloomy depression is caused in one part of the colony by the absence of loan expenditure, or that prosperity is caused in another part by loan expenditure. Judging by actual experience I think the very reverse is the case. It is well known to many honourable members in this House, though not so well known to the Colonial Treasurer, who has been absent for eight years, that the gloomy depression which has existed in this colony since 1879 has been far more marked in those districts where the greatest loan expenditure has taken place than in those districts where the expenditure has been less. The reason of that is not far to seek. Loan expenditure is almost invariably followed by speculation. We find that the greatest distress has overtaken those portions of the colony where land-speculation had followed the great expenditure of borrowed money upon railways. The financial crash of 1879 fell most heavily upon those districts. Nelson and Auckland scarcely felt that financial

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erash; while people in the most prosperous districts of New Zealand—prosperous, I mean, as regards the expenditure of borrowed money, and the rapid settlement of the land by means of railway expenditure—were brought into a state almost verging upon ruin owing to land-speculation. Other districts, which had been complaining that they had not received their fair share of expenditure, were congratulating themselves then that they had not been led into reckless speculation, but were free from that evil result. Those very districts where the expenditure had been less are the districts that have scarcely felt the depression at all. I do not agree with the statement, therefore, that gloomy depression is to be connected with the withholding of loan expenditure, or that anything like bond fide or genuine prosperity is to be connected with the expenditure of borrowed money in particular districts. Now, coming to another point, the honourable gentleman tells us the Government are determined to pass measures which shall effect a revival of the colonizing policy, which has been dead for some years past; and immediately, in reference to that statement, he tells us they will not suffer another branch of the Legislature to throw out their policy Bills. Why, the only Bill the other branch of the Legislature has thrown out is the District Railways Leasing and Purchasing Bill. Does the honourable gentleman mean to tell us that that is one of the Bills calculated to revive a colonizing policy? Certainly not. No one in the House regards it as a measure of that magnitude or character at all. Its objects could not have been better stated than they were by the honourable member for Caversham — that it may take away a certain amount of gloomy depression in particular localities and among particular individuals. That is perfectly true, for the reason that it will relieve certain persons of liabilities which no doubt are very inconvenient to them, and will set them up by making their speculations a success instead of a failure. To that extent it will relieve their depression. But it will not relieve the depression of the colony. It will not affect the commercial or financial condition of the colony in the least. It cannot in any respect be considered as a great measure of policy, calculated to revive colonization and the progress of settlement in New Zealand. I must say I think the Government have made a great mistake in taking a stand on a measure of that character. If it were some really great measure, involving large political principles, which had been thrown out by the other branch of the Legislature, upsetting the whole work of the session done by this House, then I could understand Ministers taking some strong stand, although not quite in this way. But to tell us we are to follow them in raising a conflict with another branch of the Legislature, and simply because the District Railways Leasing and Purchasing Bill has been rejected therejected simply because, as a money Bill, they could not amend it—seems to me most unreasonable and unwarranted. I think, on reflec-

tion, the Premier must see it is so. I cannot believe that, with his clear knowledge of what is right and wrong in such matters, he can believe it is wise to make such a fuss about the rejection of that measure. The honourable member for Waipawa took a most singular ground, for he told us it was not a question of the merits of any one Bill, but a question of principle. Well, I say that the principle is that the other branch of the Legislature have a constitutional right to reject a measure they do not agree with. Is it to be required of men who are called upon to vote according to their judgment and good conscience, to say they will support a Bill which they strongly object to, and which they believe to be a bad measure? Surely, if they have a constitutional right to pass a Bill of which they approve, they have a right to reject a Bill if they think that, on its merits, it is not a fair Bill and ought not to pass. It appears to me that the honourable gentleman's arguments tend in exactly the opposite direction to his own conclusion. is really on the merits of the Bill alone that he objects to the conduct of the Council; for, if he goes into the question of principle, he must admit the Council have the right which they exercised. He then said the Council had acted very precipitately. I do not think it is parliamentary to allude to what takes place there; but, as I understand, there was no precipitancy with regard to the Bill, though when the Government proposed an adjournment on the ground that statements had been made as to threats of bribery, cajolery, and intimidation, and that they wished to look into them, the Council objected to the adjournment, on this ground and this ground only: that they did not think the reason of sufficient importance to cause an adjournment and to delay the business. Otherwise the Bill seems to have been well considered, and the only reason why it was thrown out was that it had been ruled to be a money Bill, in which the Council could not make amendments which they deemed it essential to make. That was the whole point. They gave their reasons—which appear to be very sound—and, if the honourable gentlemen opposite had been a little more conciliatory when the Bill was here, and had been willing to give way a little on minor points, and to allow honourable members to make inquiries with regard to the operation of the measure, I believe the Bill would have been put in such a form that it would have been passed by the other branch of the Legislature. It was the want of proper consideration in this House, I think, which led to the rejection of the Bill in the other House; and, if it had been allowed to be modified here, then it would have been passed by the Council. The Premier told us the Government have been compelled to take the step they have taken because the Council showed a disposition to throw out all their policy Bills. But they have shown no such disposition. They have thrown out one Bill, which cannot be considered a policy Bill. I should like to know what policy, deserving the name of policy, was involved in the

District Railways Leasing and Purchasing Bill. As to the other policy Bills of the Government, only one has come before the Council, and that has been read a second time by a substantial majority. Yet, after that had taken place, after the first of their policy Bills submitted to the Council had been accepted by a substantial majority, after a very moderate and useful debate,—the honourable gentleman comes here and tells us there is a disposition in the Council to throw out all the policy Bills of the Govern-ment. The disposition, so far as it has been indicated, is quite the reverse. There is a disposition, I should say, in the other branch of the Legislature to give every favourable consideration to the policy measures of the Government compatible with doing their duty to the colony; and I judge, from what has taken place there, that they are most anxious not to be in the position of running a tilt against the Govern-ment policy. All they want to do is to prevent bad laws being passed simply on account of their being Government Bills; and, in doing that, they are quite justified. I think Ministers have cried out before they were hurt: that is really what it amounts to. They thought the Council was going to do something terrible, and so they made a bit of a noise, to frighten the But from the way in which it was done, it might be taken to be meant for this House as well as the Council. The Premier now says it only refers to the other branch of the Legislature, and not to this House. I do not know whether it is a constitutional or right thing that the other branch of the Legislature should be threatened by a Ministerial statement in this House; but it seemed to me, before the explanation given to-day, that the Premier's speech looked like a threat to this House. In the first place, he began by saying, "We wish this House distinctly to understand" so-and-Well, if he wished this House to understand that, what had it to do with the Council? It seems to me that the statement should have been made in the other branch of the Legislature by the Minister representing the Government there, and the Premier should not have come down and frightened all of us innocent members by saying, "We wish this House to understand" that, if we do not pass all their policy measures, we shall have a dissolution, and another session. I think the Premier should have some regard for the feelings of honourable members, and not terrify them by threats which he afterwards says have no reference to them, but are intended for other people. But I cannot help thinking that, when the Government put that statement for-ward, there was an intention to frighten this House into accepting the whole of the Government proposals, because the Government said distinctly that all the proposals made in the Public Works Statement, as well as in the Government Bills, were to stand together— that all or none should be passed. Well, in that a reasonable statement to make to the House? Is it not the duty of the House carefully to discriminate between one measure and another, and one proposal and another?

Mr. Wakefield

Is it not always the privilege of this House to reject appropriations which it does not consider desirable? Is it a usual thing for a Government to come down and say, "You must accept every proposal in the Public Works Statement, and vote every one of the appropriations we ask for, or we will advise the Governor to dissolve Parliament and hold another session"? I do not say that the Premier intended to say that, in the statement he made; but that was how it read, that was the interpretation I put on it when I saw it in print, and I do not think the honourable gentleman can complain on finding that the public take the same view, for I think that is the interpretation that has generally been put on it. I hope the House will not support the Government in a course which is quite unnecessary, quite uncalled for, which is detrimental to the interests of both branches of the Legislature, and derogatory to the constitutional liberties of the people of the colony. I hope the House will not take that position; and, having heard the explanation that the Premier has made to-day, I hope the Ministers them-selves will not take any further step in a direction which I am sure is opposed to the best

interests of the country.

Mr. TURNBULL.—I cannot concur in the statements of the honourable member who has just sat down, for I think it quite natural that the Government should feel very strongly on the present occasion, as they have very great cause indeed to do so. The Government have found themselves in this position: Despite all that has recently been said in this House, the Government have found the colony on the verge of ruin, its industries completely paralysed, and the colony as a whole in such a state that it is evident that, unless measures such as are indicated in the proposals submitted to us are promptly carried out, a much deeper and more general depression will ensue than exists at the present time. I think myself that the Legislative Council, in throwing out the District Railways Leasing and Purchasing Bill, acted with very great haste and want of consideration. The fact pointed out by the honourable member for Waipawa, that an adjournment was refused, indicates a feeling of hostility to the Government and this House that must be very detrimental indeed. Let us consider the condition of the country. Is it in a worse condition than it was in last year? Every honourable member who has read the papers which have been laid before this House must see that it is. It is shown that not only has our national indebtedness increased to £32,000,000, but the operations of the Land Transfer Department show that the private indebtedness has increased during the last year by £3,000,000, while the indebtedness of the colony in various other ways has increased to a very large extent indeed; and altogether it is shown that the position of the country is a very serious one. As to our great staples of wool and grain, the latter has become almost valueless to us. We have very little to look forward to in the way of prosperity, unless great

changes can be effected in the expenditure to aid in putting agricultural products in the market, and by the introduction of such measures as may tend to increase the wealth of the country. However speedily we may act, we cannot hope that any improvement will take place before next session. It is absolutely necessary to afford some relief to the country, to enable it to gain strength to live through its difficulties till the changes I have indicated are effected. Now, as to the Government Bills before us, I am sorry to say that their effects can be only palliative; but they are the only measures which can be brought down to the House by which we can hope that the country will be enabled to get over its present diffi-In reference to the District Railways Bill, which has, unfortunately, been thrown out in another place, I stated my opinion in this House, when the Bill was under discussion, that it was a matter of necessity. It was not a proposal I have always approved. It was a proposal which I resisted as strongly as the honourable member for Akaroa, the honourable member for Caversham, or the honourable member for Auckland East, in 1879. though it was perfectly right to resist it then, the present circumstances are widely different, because, as we have been assured by the Colonial Treasurer, the debentures of these district railway companies have been proved to be valueless as securities; and this is a fact which any members having the business knowledge of the honourable member for Akaroa and the honourable member for Caversham must know. They are valueless-

Government

An Hon. MEMBER.-No.

Mr. TURNBULL.—It has been shown that they are valueless, and that they are lying in the banks' coffers locking up the banks' capital. They have no representative value at all. It has been shown that the Government have invested £75,000 of Trust Funds in them; and a Committee appointed to inquire into the investment of Trust Funds states, in reference to the Waimea Plains Railway, that the the General Manager of Railways states his conviction that were this railway taken over by the Government it would yield a net return over the working expenses of £2,000 a year. That is the condition, as far as that railway is concerned. But I say that at present the whole of these debentures are absolutely worthless: they are so much capital locked up which might be used for the benefit of the colony generally, and this Bill would impart a value to them without any injury to the colony. And it must be borne in mind you do not relieve the directors of their responsibility in any way, although you assist them to a very large extent. I take another Bill -the Westport Harbour Board Bill - which would also relieve a large amount of capital which is now lying idle, and which would instantly become of immense value, giving an opportunity to private individuals to invest their savings, and throwing open to the trading community a source of wealth which must be of the greatest value to the country

at large. It is only by these measures that we can hope to palliate the difficulties under which we are labouring, and they are imperatively called for to raise the colony out of the depression into which it has fallen—a depression which seems to become the greater the longer it continues. I ask, are we to bring widespread ruin throughout the colony? The honourable member for Caversham says, "It does not matter what happens, we must make these people pay." I ask, are we to cause widespread ruin, by such a course? I say that, if this House does not insist upon these measures being passed, we shall have ruin more widely spread throughout the country than we have now. It may be said, "This is a small matter: what is this £600,000? What is this District Railways Bill to do?" I say it is not this Bill alone; it is the whole policy of the Government, which hangs together with this Bill. There are the Westport and Greymouth Harbour Bills and others, to which we have to look to get us out of our present state of depression. I regret exceedingly that the Legislative Council should have acted as it has done. I am sure it has done so without any consideration, and that the Government are quite right in saying that, if they cannot carry their measures, they will throw the responsibility on the country. It is not to punish us or any individual member of the House that they say so; but a heavy responsibility rests upon them, and if these measures are thrown out they will be quite right in throwing that responsibility on the country, in order that they may see what further steps should be taken. Other honourable members have probably had better opportunities of observing than I have had; but we have only to look at the enormous drain of wealth that goes out of the country every year, of which we see that nearly the whole of the wool money remains away-some £2,000,000 never returning-to show that some measures should be taken to help the colony in its difficulties. In the meantime these measures must be carried out. What is this East and West Coast Railway? What is all this talk about the valuable land that you are going to give away? At present it is a howling wilderness, worth nothing, and you can give great value to it; and not only that, but you give great value to the land which the Government retains in its. own possession. Are we to act as dogs in the manger, and to refuse to give this land away to those who will make it of great value, simply because they may gain something by it? I have said that the arrangement made for the construction of the Wellington-Manawatu Railway was a most wise one, because the Government of the day were completely paralysed, and by that arrangement great value was given to land which otherwise would have been worthless. What is the use of these lands now, which it is proposed to give away? No one is living on them, and no one is likely to live on them, unless something is done with them. I maintain that it would be better to give away every acre of land in the colony than to let it lie idle. What we want is people

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and it would be for the happiness of the whole | community that these lands should be utilized. Whatever may be the result, I shall feel it my bounden duty to support these measures to the very utmost. I regret deeply that such a step should have been taken by the Legislative Council. I have never held them in contempt; I have always looked upon them with the highest esteem; but, when they interfere with a measure which is the first stone of the policy of the Government, I say the Government is quite right - I do not say in holding out a threat, but-in saying that, if these Bills are rejected, there is nothing for it but an appeal to the country. What is now our condition? We have a gentleman here, for whom I have the highest respect—the late Colonial Treasurer—who has been carrying on the business of the country for the last five years. Has he relieved us of our difficulties? Are we not deeper and deeper in distress? Has he not refused to listen to all our warnings? Has he not pooh-poohed all that we have said? And has he attempted to do more than make both ends meet? say that the Premier of a country has something more to do than that. He has to think of increasing not only our happiness, but the happiness of those who depend upon us; and, if we look back at the last five years, are we going to throw the affairs of the country into the hands of those who had the management of them during that time? I say there is no other course than an appeal to the country if these Bills are thrown out, and I think the Government would be wise in taking that course, if the Bills on which their policy depends are thrown out.

Government

Mr. ROLLESTON. - I do not think the desire to strengthen our protest against what I think was a most objectionable course on Friday night should be lost sight of in a general financial discussion. I should be sorry if the debate should close without the older members of the House, who have watched its proceedings for years, entering their protest against the course now taken by the Premier. If that honourable gentleman had come down . to-day and said what I believe is really the case, this debate might have been allowed to drop. If he had said, "We made a foolish mistake, and are sorry for it, and it is better to go on with the business of the country," it would have ended the discussion. There is a very strong conviction abroad, and I think it is a right one, that that document was a mixed production: the words are the words of the Premier, but the hand is the red hand of the Treasurer. We have had threats from him before. It is no new experience. This statement bears upon the face of it, except the wordingand I may say, in passing, that I can scarcely compliment the Premier on the English into which he has put the vigorous statement of the Colonial Treasurer—a species of intimidation which, I am glad to see from what has passed, this House is not prepared to tolerate. I am sorry the Premier did not take the course of saying, "I was foolish the other night;" for the result has been a debate in which the

Colonial Treasurer and himself have made bad worse. Sir, they have brought in the very worst feeling that can possibly be introduced into this House. They have raised up the feeling of North against South. As the honourable member for Selwyn has very properly put it, our public works policy in future is to be carried on under a system of log-rolling-one district is not to get anything if another does not. The Treasurer has made the remark, "We would not have one Island basking in the lap of luxury while the other is in the midst of gloomy depression," or something to that effect. That is what he says with regard to the North and South; and I think it is very wrong that those gentlemen should have introduced such a feeling; but, as it has been brought up, I would ask, what is the position in regard to the construction of railways in the North as against the South? There is a very pretty picture drawn in the Statement of the Public Works Minister, which shows the state of progress of railways in the North and South Islands; and I ask, is it fair to say what has been said of the rejection of this District Railways Bill having anything to do with the North Island Trunk Railway? It has already been distinctly affirmed by the House that this trunk railway should be constructed, and it was part of the borrowing policy of 1882; so that the country is pledged to the work. It is not a question of one part of the country being treated differently from another, or of the balance of the different claims of various parts. The Legislature has said, by a separate statute, that this work is to be gone on with, and the only question we have had to consider on this occasion is the route, and that question has been settled. The present Government can take no credit with regard to that railway, for it is a question of the past. We had only to decide on an administrative question this year, and that has nothing to do with the district rail-ways or the East and West Coast Railway. I may even say that the Government had nothing to say to deciding as to the route of the North Island Railway, for they relegated the question to a Select Committee of South Island members, and it was decided by them. I wish to say, for my own part, that I am not at all arguing that one locality should have its expenditure balanced by another; but, if you take that line of argument, let any one look at the expenditure from year to year in different parts of the colony, and he will find that, on the population basis, Auckland is rather under an obligation for further expenditure. I do not hold that view myself. I hold that a bridge or a road or a railway in one part of the colony, if it helps forward the prosperity of the district, is of quite as much interest to this House as in any other, entirely apart from the balance of expenditure in different places. But, Sir, the point immediately before the House is, whether those threats uttered the other night were justified; and the only ground of justification which the Premier has given for them is that the District Railways Bill was rejected by the Upper House, and it is in consequence of that

Mr. Turnbull



rejection that we are likely to have a dissolution and a third session this year, for, from certain resolutions which we have since seen on the Order Paper, it would appear that we are to have something of the kind forced upon us. Now, I just want to say this, with regard to the District Railways Bill, as that was alluded to in the honourable member's speech: The District Railways Bill was forced through this House. We asked for information; we asked that we might be allowed to investigate the state of the case; we asked to be informed who were the ratepayers in the several districts, who were the shareholders, what was the capital paid up, and what was the general position of the railways. We obtained none of that information, and very few members know the position of affairs in respect to these railways.

I am sorry to say, however, that there are some individuals in this House who know too We have heard, Sir, of much about them. members who are personally well acquainted with the particulars of certain railways; and we ought to have before us, even if we have nothing more, with regard to these railways, a statement of the ratepayers who will be relieved. Just to show how little we know about it, I may say that I have heard, with regard to one of these railways—the northernmost one -that there are, at the present time, rates amounting to some thousands of pounds due in that district; and I believe it will be found that there are ratepayers in that district who have brought much pressure to bear in this House to get the measure passed, and who are in the House at the present time, and who would be considerably relieved by the measure which was rejected by the Upper House. That I believe to be the fact.

Mr. STOUT.—Name.

Mr. ROLLESTON. - Well, I do not mind naming them; it is a matter of current report. There is the honourable member for Heathcote. He is a gentleman who is considerably interested in the district through which that railway runs. The honourable member for Christchurch South is also considerably interested in that district. I say, let us have it out. If the Government will not give us information, we must fall back on common lobby rumours. Coming further down, to the next railway—that is, the Waimate Railwaycan any one suppose for one moment that that railway is to be taken over to relieve poor ratepayers, or that it is to be done in the interests of any but the large property-holders? Coming further down, to the Duntroon and Hakateramea Railway, what is the fact? We have only incidental information; but the Premier told us that that line was to be taken over in the interests of the deferred-payment settlers. Now, I have taken some pains to ascertain the facts.

Mr. STOUT.—I did not say so. I said

"mainly."

Mr. ROLLESTON .- If not in the interest of the deferred-payment selectors, it must be in the interests of others — the large landholders.

Mr. STOUT .- I did not put it in that way. What I said was this: that the Government had done a wrong to these people because it acted contrary to the conditions under which the railway was allowed to be built. The Government smuggled an Act through the House -without giving the people an opportunity of protesting-which allowed rates to be levied before the railway was completed, contrary to the Act under which the railway was authorized.

Mr. ROLLESTON. - I differ entirely from the honourable gentleman. What the Government did was this: The District Railways Act was really a deed of agreement as between the State and certain localities and the companies, and the State had to see that the provisions that were embodied in the Act were given effect to, and the Bill to which the honourable gentleman refers in no way went beyond the original intention as between the parties concerned.

Mr. STOUT .- It has.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—No injustice has been

Mr. STOUT.—Oh, yos, there has been. Mr. ROLLESTON.—Well, that is a matter of opinion; but if there has been injustice done let us look into it. There has not been time to look into these matters. We have had them pressed upon our consideration in such a man-ner that, even if I were satisfied the case was just, I should feel it was indecent; and my objection is all the stronger because of the want of information. I maintain that the large landholders who promoted the Duntroon and Hakateramea Railway, for instance, and who have secured so much additional value to their estates by its construction, have no right to complain of the House having taken action to see that they fulfilled their engagements; and that is all that the House has done. It is the large landholders who benefit in the case of the Duntroon and Hakateramea line, and not the deferred-payment settlers, as the Premier would have us believe. I am stating disjointed facts, and, if what I am stating are not facts, then it is the business of the Government to disprove my statements; and I am very glad that the Legislative Council looked at the matter in that light. Then, take the case of the Waimea Plains Railway. There is £4,000 of rates due in that district, of which £3,000 is due by the company; and we are asked to pay that. The taxpayers of New Zealand are asked to relieve the company of that liability of £3,000. Did the House know that, at the time it passed the Bill? I do not think it did, or it would have hesitated before it passed the Bill. We are told that this measure is brought forward to further the colonizing functions of the Government; but I say it is a Bill to further the colonizing functions of the Agricultural Company. We have got these companies well represented in the lobbies, we have got them here in the House, and to some extent even on the Government benches. We know that the Colonial Treasurer has a considerable interest in that company. I say that, in

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the whole history of New Zealand, there has never previously been known such a thing as the course taken with regard to this District Railways Bill. The Premier talks of a dissolution; but he knows perfectly well that a dissolution would not suit his book at all, and that the country is not going to be appealed to on such a subject as the District Railways Bill. The Legislative Council has exercised its legitimate functions. It is a great principle that, when a matter of public policy has been established, such as that which was established by the District Railways Act, that policy can only be counteracted or altered by Bill, so that the Legislative Council may have an opportunity of discussing and determining how, and to what extent, settled policy is to be interfered with. It was therefore quite right that the Government proposals should have been put into the form of an Act; and the question now will be, whether, the Legislative Council having said that a particular policy is not to be changed, this House will be intimidated into doing, without the consent of that body, that which it cannot do with its consent. I hope not. To talk of a dissolution is all nonsense. I believe that the country will look with gratitude to the Council for having stood between the people and an act of redhanded plunder.

Mr. SEDDON.—The word "dissolution" seems to have had a terrible effect upon the honourable member for Geraldine. I could not help wondering, when the honourable gentle-man rose and I saw his nervousness, what could possibly be the cause of it; but this was apparent when he referred to the word "dissolution." The honourable gentleman, I believe, represents a Canterbury constituency. Now, I hold in my hand a letter containing the views expressed by an ex-member of this House on this subject of the rejection by the Legislative Council of this District Railways Bill, and they are, to my mind, a complete answer to the views expressed by the honourable member for Geraldine. I have not said anything on the subject of these district railways myself; but, if the facts are as adduced by Mr. Wason, the gentleman I refer to, then I say the honourable member for Geraldine is completely answered.

The letter is as follows:

"Corwar, 22nd October, 1884. "SIR,-From your leading article this morning the public would infer that the Legislative Council, by their hasty rejection of the District Railways Bill, have deserved well of the coun-

"I am very decidedly of the contrary opinion, and, by your leave, will endeavour to show that the action of the Council, if not unconstitu-tional, was ill-judged and intemperate, and calculated to lead the inquiring mind to find out why a body representing nothing, responsible to no one, should, at an enormous cost to the country, be suffered to interfere with the efforts of the representatives of the people to promote justice, peace, and prosperity. An objection you make to the Bill is that a large shareholder in one of the companies, and also

one of the Council, kissed his hand and made signs of congratulation to the supposed obs quious majority while they were in the sacri discharge of their duty.

"It is certainly much to be regretted the the 'Honourables,' by Act of Parliament, a question did not exercise more discretion; but surely, Sir, the very action in question, which you very properly take exception, is reason not for rejecting any given Bill, befor considering how far 'Honourables' may without their divine right of legislation be Another objection made is the challenged. certain large shareholders in the various com panies would, after having arranged certain railways to suit their own convenience an raise the value of their land, escape their lim bility and throw it upon the country.

"The objection is a serious one, and, as representative remarked, a bitter pill to swallow, for it is notorious that every railway which has been constructed under the Act has been run through by a few active, wealthy parties in many cases with no care whatever for the interests of the people, and, I am afraid, with out any regard for the Act of 1877, under which

the railways were constructed.

"In one railway district, in which I am spe-cially interested, the company never obtained either a majority in number of the ratepayers or a majority in value of the land.

"In another, the company bullied and bounced the unfortunate ratepayers to acquiesce in an arrangement for reclassifying the district, under the perfectly impossible threat that, if they did not do so, they would carry the line to their

original terminus and levy increased rates.
"In another, a rate of 6s. 8d. in the pound was authorized by the Government, and extorted from any one foolish enough to pay it. In this district I have not seen the original rates gazetted; but it is not for a moment credible that any settler would have voted for a railway which would entail upon him such taxation as to amount to actual confiscation.

"It may be argued that the above objectionable proceedings are only reasons in support of the action of the Council; and the argument would be a good one were it not for the fact that, by the Act of 1877, the Government are the sole judges of appeal, and various Governments, having acquiesced and approved of the proceedings and improprieties of the companies. have thereby entailed upon themselves and successors a responsibility towards the ratepayers of the district that they cannot long evade.

"It is perhaps a pity that the present Government did not take a leaf out of their predecessors' book, when Messrs. Atkinson, Rolleston, and Co. wanted to pass a District Railways Bill solely in the interests of a few wealthy speculators. They printed one Bill early in the session — a harmless enough document. Just at the close of the session, when many members had left, they suddenly produced the most scandalous, disgraceful piece of legislation that has ever sullied a Statute Book, and passed it into law before the sleepy, worn-out old gentlemen who were left knew where they were.

"If my language is too strong, I shall be trateful if you or some correspondent will put into fitting Billingsgate criticism of a measure which is supposed to have the effect of upteting all existing contracts between the company and ratepayers; a measure which alters he whole classification of land; a measure the whole classification of land; a measure transaction with the object of increasing over a transaction of the liability of certain ratepayers, and which entails an additional three years' burden of taxation upon the suffering ratetrayers.

"Now when a Government is in office having some regard for justice and the prosperity of the country, and endeavours to remedy the sins it is predecessors, the same body, powerless for good to stop legislation absolutely wicked, shows itself an active agent in the propagation of avil.

M GAII.

"Unless some remedial measures are taken, the district railways will depopulate and ruin every district which is cursed with them. It is no doubt very objectionable that a few land-speculators should make their thousands and tens of thousands out of those railways; but the alternative of annually dragging hardsome frugal and saving enough to acquire a tens, or extorting from every tradesman a tax apon his enterprise, and of robbing the unfortunate farmer of all that disastrous seasons, tow prices, and heavy charges have left him, is surely an evil a thousandfold greater.

"It is possible the sere Wellington irresponsibilities may reject the West Coast Railway Bill. If so, I think, Sir, instead of a feeble growl from a discontented agriculturist, by shousands and thousands men and women will safiect upon the following words, taken from an linglish paper, with regard to the present crisis the Home: 'But it is quite impossible for us to admit that a number of hereditary landlords, that a number of hereditary landlords, and be allowed to mutilate and reject every Bill brought in by a Liberal Ministry possessing the confidence of the nation.'—Yours, &c.,

"CATHCART WASON."

From what I know of the past history of district railway measures I have always been pposed to them. proced to them. The words used by Mr. vason are literally true. The amendments of the measure passed the House at the latter ad of the session, when members even of this House were wearied and fagged out, and when bey scarcely knew what evil they were per-etrating. We also know what occurs in anther place at the end of the session. Those entlamen who, at the commencement of the well the measures submitted to them, at the and of the session, and at the beck and call the Government of the day — particularly then it is the Continuous Government the measures wholesale. I have seen fifteen heasures go through in as many minutes. I by that what is complained of by the rate-lyers affected by the District Railways Acts that those Acts were passed through by

the other branch of the Legislature without due consideration; and that, I hold, is the sole reason why the present Government have brought down this measure this session. Two wrongs never make a right, but that the ratepayers have been wronged there is no doubt. If the honourable member for Geraldine is anxious for the part of the country that has been so kind to him in past times, let me give him some information which at present, I am sure, he does not possess. I do not like tosee a no-confidence motion raised by a simple motion to adjourn the House. Honourable members on the Opposition side of the House, particularly the honourable member for Selwyn, the honourable member for Geraldine, and the honourable member who moved the motion, feel very strongly on the district-railway question; but this discussion simply means discussing whether or not the Government of the day have the confidence of this House; and it refers, first, to the memorandum read after the Public Works Statement, and, secondly, to the resolutions which this House, without a dissenting voice, agreed to postpone until to-morrow. This discussion is altogether out of place; but it would appear very bad on my part, as a Government supporter, if I were to allow the remarks made by those who have taken part in the debate to go unchallenged. I would say to the honourable member for Geraldine that the East and West Coast Railway Bill has been so mutilated in another place that all the labours of this House and the votes of a large majority of the House have gone for nothing. We were told, at the commencement of this debate, that we were doing wrong in speaking of what had been done in another place. At that very time in another place they were doing that which they have threatened to do, and that was, bringing themselves into conflict with this House and, really, with the country. At the very moment that the honourable member for Geraldine was defending another Chamber, they were taking away from Canterbury and from the West Coast of New Zealand that which, in my opinion, will bring about what the Government have sought—that is, the prosperity of the whole of New Zealand.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I must remind the honourable member that he is not at liberty to referto what is being transacted at the present time

in another House.

Mr. SEDDON.—I will conform to the rules of the House, but I will state that, at the time-the real cause of this debate was being considered by the Government, it was openly stated in the lobbies that the East and West Coast Railway Bill would be so amended in another place that it was bound to bring that place into conflict with this House. It was also openly stated in the lobbies—

Mr. SPÉAKER.—I do not think it consistent with the dignity of the House to refer to what

takes place in the lobbies.

Mr. STOUT.—As a point of order, I would say that is exactly what the honourable member for Geraldine did this afternoon. In his

speech he quoted what took place in the lobbies.

Government

Mr. SPEAKER.—I did not observe that the honourable member for Geraldine did so, or I should have called his attention to the matter. It is surely obvious that it is not consistent with the dignity of the House that what is said in the lobbies should be brought forward as a matter of debate in the House.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—I may be allowed, by way of explanation, to say that, as far as I recollect my words, they were somewhat to this effect: that we had been left, for information, to what could be picked up in the lobbies and outside as to what was the true position of the district railways; that there were certain rumours outside and in the lobbies, and that we had no means of judging of their accuracy.

Sir J. VOGEL.—Speaking to the point of order, I should like to say that the honourable member for Geraldine was not only allowed to go very much outside the question, but he made attacks on honourable members who had

not the right to reply.

Mr. SEDDON. — I quite concur with the wisdom of your ruling, Sir, and its justice; but I will say this: that I myself received in-formation, which I could not discredit, to the effect that the East and West Coast Railway Bill would be so mutilated that its passing would render inoperative the wishes of a majority of this House.

Mr. SPEAKER. — That is dealing with a

matter still under the consideration of the

other House.

Mr. SEDDON. — I have no wish to do so. There is another matter that must be alluded to. The Colonial Treasurer remarked that, in the work of colonization, due respect and attention should be paid to the same in both Islands, and that we should treat the colony as a whole, and not deal with it unequally; and that in another place, as far as they had gone, they were not going in that direction. With they were not going in that direction. regard to Greymouth and the Westport part of the country, provision was made in the policy Bills of the Government to give great prosperity to those parts of the colony, and it would also be beneficial to the rest of the Middle Island, and to the colony as a whole. Well, information—and from a very definite source—came to my hearing that the same attitude would be taken as regards these policy measures of the Government as was taken up with regard to the District Railways Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The honourable member is still persisting in bringing before this House a debate which is going on in another Chamber. If he persists, it will be my duty to rule him

out of order.

Mr. SEDDON.—They are not being debated? Mr. SPEAKER.—They are so far under the consideration of the other House that they

have not been disposed of.

Mr. SEDDON. — They have not been disposed of. But one speaker went so far as to say this, and was not called to order: that this statement of the Government, or memorandum attached to the Public Works Statement,

was read as a precautionary measure, that it might prevent hereafter things occurring in another branch of the Legislature which would not have occurred if the notice had been given beforehand — that possibly the excuse would be made that, if fair warning had been gives, proper consideration would have been given to matters of policy brought down by the Gevernment. However, as you know, I never like to disagree with the rulings of the Chair, and I shall endeavour in my remarks, consistently with your ruling, Sir, to bring a few more ma-ters under the consideration of the House. The honourable member for Selwyn disagreed altogether with the statement by the Colonial Treasurer, and insisted that, even though the North Island Trunk Railway was constructed at the same time it had no bearing whatever works that might be projected in other parts of the colony, and which were referred to in the policy Bills of the Government. I disagree entirely with that dictum, and for this reason that the whole of the west coast of the Middle Island, when the public works policy of 1870 to 1876 was being given effect to, was depopulated and for this reason: that the labouring-class and tradespeople were attracted to other part of the colony by the expenditure of publi money on the eastern side of the Middle Island. So it would happen now. If all the pub lic works and all the public expenditure were to be centred in the North Island it would mean the depopulation of the Middle Island. Consequently it would ultimately prove in jurious to the North Island itself, when the works were completed and the money expended as it must be to the Middle Island when the works are progressing. And, when each Islan has equal claims upon this House and upon the colony for the expenditure of money, I take it that the policy Bills of the Government affect the Middle Island; and that the Middle Island has a just claim to have those work constructed, and has an equal claim with the North Island to see that the whole of the policy of the Government should be give effect to. And I hold that the two man effect to. And I hold that the two mu go on concurrently; and, if the Government were to allow their Bills to be mutilated as an expenditure to go on upon works in North Island only, then the Middle Island must inevitably suffer, and they would not be deserving of the name of Government if the were to permit that to take place. I think the should also be taken into consideration: W are told this memorandum of the Governme applies to another place. Any one who fair weighed the words of the Premier would have understood them as I have. In New Zealan we have had a growing representation for some years in another place. We have had honour able gentlemen called there from time to time by the Continuous Government, and, Sir, the gentlemen at the present moment are oppos to the present Government. That will not You will find that Councillors calls denied. to the Council by the late Government in case have voted against the District Railwa Bill. They have their party leanings. The

Mr. Stout



feeling must be, and is, rampant in another lace. The honourable gentlemen who have taken an active part in throwing out the District Railways Bill—those who have made use of arguments very much like those which the honourable member for Geraldine has applied to the Colonial Treasurer—they are those who have been called to the Upper House by the late Government. And allow me to say this, not wishing to be too personal: that in some cases they are gentlemen who have been rejected on two or three occasions by the electors of New Zealand; and I do think that, under those circumstances, where they have been partisans and supporters of a Government, and have been on that account rejected by the constituents they have appealed to, and were then called to another place for party purposes, it ill becomes them to fly in the laces of the people. They cannot do that by coming into this Chamber, because the people rejected them; but they are called to another place, and they exercise the same party pro-clivities and give the same votes as they would have given if they had been in this House. What I object to—and what I think the Government has a right to object to—is that too much party feeling has been imported into the debate on that Bill. With regard to one honourable gentleman who took a leading part as regards the rejection of that Bill, I was told on very good authority that he was a placeseeker.

An Hon. Member.—Who was he?

Mr. SEDDON.—It is an honourable member in another place I am alluding to.

Mr. SPEAKER. — You must not use such an offensive term as "place-seeker," as applied to an honourable gentleman in another place, who has no opportunity here of rebutting the

imputation.

Mr. SEDDON.—It is not my wish to be at all offensive; but I scarcely know the term I might apply that would not be offensive. What I allude to appeared in public print, and was not contradicted. I will say that he was a person seeking a position which he failed to obtain. Naturally enough, then, there would be a spirit of resentment; and, although, in deference to your wishes, I will not distinctly make the statement, yet I must say this: that, although his seeking the position might be commendable enough, still, at the same time, it has proved injurious to the passing of the District Railways Bill. Now, if the Government in this House passes its policy measures, and fails to pass them in another place, the consensus of opinion of the electors would be that the Government really has not the confidence of Parliament. it places them altogether in a false position. If their policy Bills are rejected in another place, then those who are in opposition in this Chamber will say, "Vacate the benches at once." And they would have very good grounds for saying it. I hold that majorities must rule wherever there is representative government. We have representative government in New that I could not allow some of the remarkable. The minority in this House, and that have been made to pass unchallenged.

among them those who have taken part in the debate this afternoon, have said to the Council, "You have done well in throwing out that Bill: you will do still better if you throw out the rest of the policy Bills of the Govern-ment." They are encouraging members in another place to treat the rest of the policy Bills of the Government in the same way as they have treated the District Railways Bill; and I say that is unfair. It is the minority bringing pressure to bear upon those in another place; and, Sir, it is done—the honourable gentlemen will pardon me, but I am under the impression it has been done-with that object in view. I say it is unfair, and it is worse, far worse, and more to be censured, than the step taken by the Government, which is simply giving a fair warning that they intend to maintain and carry out their policy as a whole, or take other steps. Now I come to a few personal remarks made by the honourable member for Geraldine, and they were personally applied to the Colonial Treasurer. Judging by the countenances of honourable members who entirely disagree with the present Government, they felt sorry the honourable member for Geraldine should have made the remarks he did. He said as plainly as he could, and at the same time not quite plainly enough to be brought to order by you, that the motion of the Colonial Treasurer in dealing with the District Railways Bill was brought about simply because that honourable gentleman was himself financially connected with the venture. Well, all I can say is this: that there is a complete answer to a charge of that kind in the fact that the Colonial Treasurer holds a high position in the minds of the people of this country and in the minds of a large majority of this House; and I believe there is not a man in the House except the honourable member for Geraldine who would make the same ill-na-tured and unfounded charge. I hold myself that, if the remarks made by Mr. Wason are correct - and I have no reason to doubt itthere is quite sufficient in that one fact alone to vindicate the Colonial Treasurer, the Premier, and the present Government. Under the Act of 1877 power was given to the local bodies to levy rates, and that power was taken away by the Amendment Act of 1882 and given to the companies instead. That is the difference between the two positions. Well, Sir, if the local bodies in the districts affected by the district railways had the power of levying the rates, there would be no rates levied at all. The ratepayers at that time were consenting parties. They knew that the power was left in the hands of those representing them in the local bodies. In 1882 that power was taken away, and by a Government of which the member for Geraldine was a member. Under the circumstances, I shall vote against the motion for the adjournment of the House. No doubt the whole of this debate will have to take place again when the resolutions are brought down by the Government; but I felt that I could not allow some of the remarks

Mr. SHRIMSKI.—It is not my intention to speak with regard to the action taken by the Legislative Council, because it is out of my province to do so; but, Sir, I can say this: that I was one who at all times strongly op-posed the District Railways Bill. And I had posed the District Railways Bill. to do so against honourable gentlemen who are now occupying the Opposition benches. It does not come with very good grace from the honourable member for Geraldine when he taunts members of the Government with not having given that information which the honourable gentleman required. The honourable gentleman himself was a member of that Ministry which advanced that large sum of money to these companies, and he ought to have that information with regard to the position of these companies; and there was no need for him now to rise, because he is on the Opposition side of the House, and taunt the Ministry for not affording that information which he himself required and ought to have had when the Public Trust Funds were invested in these companies. During 1883 the late Government introduced a Bill to amend the District Railways Act, and its first reading took place on the 29th August. On the 30th August the second reading took place, and on the 8th September the House prorogued. I then pointed out to the honourable gentleman that the Bill was a very serious one, affecting a number of settlers, who had not had an opportunity given to them to say whether they approved of the Bill or not. I then objected to the Bill on their behalf, because, as I pointed out to the Minister at the time, numbers of people had purchased land under deferred payment, even in the district that I have the honour to represent, after the railway had been constructed; they had no idea that they would be called upon to pay any rates for the railway, and consequently they paid a very high price for the land they then purchased. What was the reply? "We must pass this Bill;" and the Bill was passed, without giving these people an opportunity of saying whether they liked it or not. I pointed out also at that time that the rating which the Act was to en-force on those people was unjust, because those who had previously settled upon the land had signed an agreement to become liable providing the railway were constructed from a point to a point; but, instead of that, the railway had only been constructed a por-tion of the way, and hence, deriving no bene-fit from it, they did not feel that they could justly be called upon to pay the rates. But, Sir, the Bill was forced through the House in spite of all opposition; and the late member for Ashburton (Mr. Ivess) and myself were the only two who strongly opposed the measure, because we asked for time to enable those people who were affected by the Bill to express an opinion upon it; but all our endeavours were in vain, and the honourable member and his Government forced the measure through the House. In 1883 the honourable member for Geraldine introduced a measure — the Land Bill-and I give him great credit for

the energy he displayed in bringing the ma sure forward for the settlement of people on th sure forward for who was a land; and the honourable gentleman as intimated that, if the Council rejected the as intimated that, if the Council rejected the would resign. Did the honourable was rejected. gentleman resign, when the Bill was rejected No; he swallowed the pill. He took his defeat and did not resign his seat. I believe office we of some consequence to him, and he though he would do better by remaining in than our But, still, when the honourable gentlema brought forward a measure which he said would tend to benefit the community as a whole, sa when he was defeated on that Bill, he ought t have resigned himself, or his Government ough to have resigned. I have been opposed to is District Railways Bill since it was first inter duced up to the present time. At the same tim I rise in my place now merely for the purpos of asking that fair-play should be given; and when this Ministry take certain steps which they consider they are justified in taking, it is becomes the honourable member for Geraldin to speak as he has done with regard to the action of the Government. I do not say that it is my intention to support the Bill. I have not done so hitherto; but I believe in fair-play and I rose simply to answer the honourable gentleman in regard to his own action.

Mr. SUTTER.—I regret that this discussion

has taken place at this stage, as it seems to b quite out of place. I am not at all surprise at the action taken by the honourable mem ber for Auckland East, as he has consistently opposed the measure throughout. He oppose it in 1879, and he now opposes it again. I am surprised that honourable gentlemen on thi side of the House should oppose this measure considering that they tried to smuggle the mea sure through the House in 1879. They aske for £400.000 to be spent on those railways and when they failed in that—failed in get They aske ting the Bill passed through the House—the passed a measure guaranteeing 75 per cent. and without many members knowing anythin about it. Among the members who voted is the majority for that Bill I find the names o honourable gentlemen who are now so much opposed to the Government measure. I fin Mr. Bryce, Mr. Rolleston, and my friend Mr Wakefield voting for that measure. The ought to be ashamed of talking as they did thi afternoon. I trust the discussion will come to an end, so that we may get on with the busi ness before the House.

Mr. J. W. THOMSON.—I do not wish to prolong the discussion, although there are a few points that have not been referred to; but, by way of a finale to this discussion, I will tellivory. An old lady was presented with a copy of the well-known book "Pilgrim's Progress. The book had large explanatory notes. The gentleman who presented her with the book called a few days afterwards, and asked he how she liked it. "Oh," she said, "I like the book very much. I can understand 'The Pilgrim's Progress' very well, but I cannot understand the explanatory notes." I thind that is very much the position into which we

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have drifted. The Premier read a statement on Friday night. Like "The Pilgrim's Progress," it is a little obscure; but its obscurity has been very much intensified this afternoon by the explanations given by the Premier and the Colonial Treasurer, and which have led in a great measure to this debate - explanations which appear to me to be altogether outside, at least in a great measure outside, of the speech which was made by the Premier on Friday night last. Sir G. GREY .- I wish to say a few words in reply. I still feel very great regret that the Premier made the statement he did, as I think it was not deserved by this House. We took a very fair part in the discussion of the measures of the Government, and we had a perfect right to oppose them if we differed from the Government. They were, nevertheless, carried by an overwhelming majority in almost every instance. The Government had everything their own way; and why such a course as the Premier adopted should have been taken I am at a loss to understand. In all my experience I have never known anything of the kind to be done before. I cannot find that any similar thing has ever occurred in other Parliaments, including the Imperial Parliament. Certainly, where differences have taken place between the two Houses of the Imperial Parliament, the representatives of the people have freely commented upon the action of the House of Lords. But the remarks made by the Premier were a threat to this House as well as to the other branch of the Legislature, and they had a tendency to put an end altogether to freedom of debate. The other questions that have been brought forward I shall not go into at any length; but I cannot help making remarks upon one or two points. The Colonial Treasurer was pleased to say that in opposing these Railway Bills a startling element of selfishness was to be found. I say that element of selfishness was on the part of those who brought the Bills forward, because I understand, and it has been admitted, that both the Premier and the Treasurer, as being interested parties, were unable to vote upon their first Bill. I say that the attempt on the part of interested parties to saddle the colony with a debt of from six hundred thousand pounds to a million pounds was an act of selfishness, and in one respect it is an unparalleled act. Let them turn now to the United States and see what is going on there at the present moment. In that country a measure was passed, which was attempted in this country, for the purpose of establishing milways by giving large tracts of land to companies to help in the construction of the railways-alternate blocks of land-and the result has been disastrous to the United States, quite as disastrous as it has been in this country. I believe the great mass of the people of the United States feel that something must be done in order that the Government may get possession of the railways. They have laid down this great rule: that no step should be taken in this matter without the whole people being consulted, and having sufficient time given to them to return members specially to decide

upon that question, whether such a great step should be taken. Now, here the people of this colony are to have a new debt of very great magnitude, in proportion to the population, imposed upon them to relieve a number of gentlemen who are bringing the measure forward, and the people have had no opportunity in their constituencies or at the polling-places of showing whether they are in favour of such a measure or not. I have gone into the returns, and I believe it cannot be denied that the sufferers are the Waimea Plains Railway Company—that the sufferers are the New Zealand Agricultural Company—that they are paying the rates at the present moment, or the greater part of them. I have looked over the returns, and I see that, whereas £4,400 was the amount of rate to be paid, the New Zealand Agricultural Company were liable for £3,000 of that rate. As far as I can understand, that is what the return shows. I say it is wrong that a measure of this kind, imposing a great debt upon the colony, and corresponding taxation on the people, should be brought forward in this kind of way. Let us follow the American practice. Let full information be given to the whole country that a measure of this kind is to be brought forward; let members be returned for the purpose of imposing these burdens upon the people, if they desire to bear them. Why should interested people bring a measure of this kind forward and force it through the House without our having sufficient information concerning it? Honourable members asked for full information before the measure was forced on; but it was carried through the House, without the people and a certain number of members knowing what its real results would be, without their having sufficient information to enable them to form an opinion on the subject. In this state it was sent on to the other House, and it was there rejected. And I confess I was glad the Bill was rejected. If the statements made to this House were true, the delay in passing the measure cannot injure the shareholders. We were assured that we were going to take something from them that was very valuable—that we were to gain a great advantage. If that statement was correct, the delay that takes place in carrying the measure can do no evil. Why such a statement should have been made by the Premier I can-not understand. I deny that that is the proper principle that should guide us. I felt that the House should have an opportunity of considering what is being done—that the Government should have an opportunity of making an explanation. I think their explanation was unsatisfactory, not only to this House, but to the other House. The Premier said there was no intention to threaten this House - that the threat was to the other House. According to the plain language of the statement the threat was addressed to this House, and it was an interference with its liberties. It is the duty of Parliament to resist interference of that kind. When the motion comes on notice is not given, and we do not know what it is that is coming on. First of all, when notice of motion was given, the Government evidently found that they had made a mistake, and, filled with fear and apprehension, they asked to be allowed to alter their notice of motion, and they were allowed to do so. Now, to-day, we were told that the motion was not to be made, but that an opportunity of discussing it would be given to us.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The honourable member will not be in order, when debating a motion for the adjournment of the House, to discuss a notice of motion which is on the Paper for tomorrow

Sir G. GREY.—I shall refer to one which is

past, and which is not on the Paper.

Mr. SPEAKER.—If the honourable gentleman refers to the purport of the motion as it is on the Paper for to-morrow, I shall have to rule that the honourable gentleman is out of

order.

Sir G. GREY .- I shall refer to the motion the Government proposed to move, which is not on the Paper. They brought forward a notice of motion, and then they withdrew it from the Order Paper, and substituted something to which I will not further allude, and which the Colonial Treasurer said was not to come on to-day. I wish simply to maintain this: that delay ought to be allowed before we attempt to entail a great debt on the country in addition to present liabilities. I say that the two leading members of the Government are to be judged by what they are doing, and I say they are altogether wrong in the course they have taken in bringing this measure forward. It should be their duty to wait until they are out of office, and allow some other persons who are not personally interested to do it. If Mr. Gladstone, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, were to bring forward such a Bill in England to impose a tax upon the British nation such as this is for us, just conceive how many millions it would be for Great Britain. Take this proposed additional debt and multiply it by sixty, and see what it would be! Would they dare to bring forward a measure of that kind, themselves being interested in it?

Mr. STOUT.—Will the honourable member

say how I am interested in it?

Sir G. GREY.—I know the honourable gentleman could not vote.

Mr. STOUT.—I declined to vote, as I thought it was not proper, being solicitor for one of the companies.

Sir G. GREY.—That I hold to be consider-

able interest indeed

Mr. STOUT.—I think the honourable gentleman should withdraw his remarks in which he accuses me of being personally interested in the Bill.

Sir G. GREY.—I am simply saying what the onourable gentleman has told us. It was a honourable gentleman has told us. thing impossible for me to know otherwise, as the Government refused to give any information, and-

Mr. STOUT.—The Government never refused

to give any information.

Sir G. Grey

Sir G. GREY.—I say the Government declined to allow us to get the information we

wanted. Every honourable gentleman in the House knows that, when we got up-when leading member after leading member got up-in this House and asked for delay until information was afforded us, delay was refused. Did not the honourable gentleman walk out of the House and refuse to vote because he was interested?

Mr. STOUT.-I should like to know on what grounds the honourable member asserts that I declined to vote because I was interested. I

did not say so.

Sir G. GREY. - The question was raised, I understand, that those who were interested The honourable gentleman should not vote. left the House and did not vote, and I understand him now to say that he was interested so far that he had been solicitor to this unfortunate company which we are now asked to relieve.

Mr. STOUT.—What company?

Sir G. GREY .- The New Zcaland Agricultural Settlement Company. The honourable gentleman was the law adviser of that company, which has sunk into these difficulties which it seeks to be relieved from.

Mr. STOUT.—As far as I know, the company has not sunk into any difficulties, and it has

never approached this House.

Sir G. GREY.—The ratepayers have approached this House, and the honourable gentleman was eloquent in the extreme as to the hardships those ratepayers have suffered.

Mr. STOUT.—So they have. Sir G. GREY.—Well, the company of which the honourable gentleman was the law adviser was the greatest ratepayer. Will the honourable gentleman explain how-

Mr. STOUT.—If the House will repeal the Act allowing rates to be levied, then I should not have a word to say on behalf of the rate-

payers.

Sir G. GREY.—Then, we are asked to buy up these railways, and relieve the companies of their difficulties. If the Government will assume the responsibility of all this, the honourable gentleman is satisfied?

Mr. STOUT.—I never proposed anything of

the sort.

Sir G. GREY.—Surely the Bill proposes it. Why, the Government are to purchase them, and that is what I object to. And I say, if a certain proposal were brought forward entailing as many millions of debt on England as you are about to entail on this colony, in pro-portion to its population—if it were brought forward in this way—it would be most strongly No Government would venture to bring such a measure forward in the sudden manner in which this was brought forward. If such a proposal were brought forward, it would be submitted for full consideration in one session, not as a Bill, but as a statement of what was proposed to be done, and some power would be given to those who were to be called on to pay so large a sum of money to determine whether the purchase should be made or not. I think this is a very ill-advised purchase, and the country should surely have an opportunity



[HOUSE.]

of making its voice heard, before it is committed to a measure by which every man, woman, and child in New Zealand will be taxed to relieve certain gentlemen of their obligations, and to provide a large sum of money which those gentlemen are to put in their own pockets. The Premier knows that one of these railways was made principally to improve the property of the New Zealand Agricultural Company. Should we pay for that? I say, No. And it would have been more becoming if any other person, who was not a party—who was not the law adviser, concurring in these things—if some person not personally interested in any company had brought forward this proposal. I say that is the rule of parliamentary life, and it should be the rule of parliamentary life in New Zealand. And those who resisted the thing, when we spoke against it, were overridden by the Government. We were forbidden to speak about it. We were spoken to like a lot of schoolboys and told that the Government were determined not to give way to our request for dolay. I say nothing could be more unfair than the action of the Government. Moreover it was calculated to create ill-feeling between the two Islands. I deny that the North Island has any desire to impoverish the South Island. I deny that any money to be expended in the North Island will create an undue advantage over the South. On the contrary, we are only promised that justice which has been promised for years. I am fighting this question that this debt should not be imposed on the North—that the people there should not be taxed to make good charges from which they have derived no benefit. But I and those who think with me have been contending for the population of the South Island as well as for that of the North Island. And we contend that the Premier, in making such a statement as he has made to this House, was not justified by the rules of Parliament, but that in doing so a dangerous attack was made on our constitutional liberties and on the freedom of debate. It was necessary that some one should bring forward a motion on that point, and it was with the consent of a number of members of this House that I brought forward this motion. I am sure that the course I have taken will be commended by the people of the whole country, and I am sure that it will be agreed from end to end of New Zealand that the members of the Government, in allowing the Premier to make the statement he has made, were all equally guilty of a very unwise and a very improper act.

Motion for adjournment negatived.

### POLICE OFFENCES BILL.

On the motion, That the amendments made in this Bill in Committee be agreed to by the

Mr. SEDDON moved, That the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of reconsidering clause 13. The clause as amended would be a gross reflection on the intelligence of the representa-

merely be courting an expression of opinion from that body of the absolute necessity for their services in rejecting Bills of this kind when submitted to them. Besides the mistakes and amendments which made the clause absurd, there was a very grave objection to it, inasmuch as it was not required at the present time. This was one of the most important questions which could come before them, as it interfered with the liberty of the subject, and the people had in no way asked the Legislature to legislate upon it. It simply amounted to this: that there were people in the House who held extreme views on certain subjects, and unfortunately they had the power placed in their hands of inserting a portion of a clause which, to his mind, was very objectionable. Why should we, at this time of day, go back to the days of Charles II.? Things had altogether altered, and yet there was still in existence in the Provincial District of Otago an ordinance far more drastic than the Act of Charles II., but which had been a dead-letter for some years past, because it was not required, and because custom and the good sense of the people rebelled against it. And yet that was the provision which it was now sought to embody in this Bill. It was proposed to enact that on Sunday it should be penal to perform absolute necessities. If a person carried on his trade or calling within view of a public place it was penal; but the interpretation of "public place" was very wide. And, then, the clause itself was very contradictory, for a tradesman could carry on any other trade but his own on the Sunday without being amenable to the clause. For example, if a carpenter worked in his garden on a Sunday the law would not touch him; if he made or repaired a boiler and annoyed the whole neighbourhood by his hammering, he was not liable to a penalty; but if, after working for his employer all the week, he chanced to nail up a weatherboard or to touch a hammer or a piece of wood on the Sunday, he would at once be liable to a penalty. The same arguments applied, vice versa, to the gardener: he might do all the things that the carpenter could not do, but if he put in a plant on Sunday he would be amenable to the law. How would it apply to the mining districts? It was the custom in the outlying districts, where miners resided some distance from the townships, for them on Sundays to go to church, or to the post-office for their letters, and on their way home to call for stores; but under this Bill the storekeeper would be liable to a. penalty of £1 for every time he supplied them with stores in that way. That would be a very great hardship in more ways than one. First. of all, the miner would have to go in on a. week-day, and perhaps lose half a day's work, to get his stores; and, again, he would have to go in on the Sunday to get his letters, or to go to church. There was a generally understood observance of the Sunday throughout the whole of New Zealand, and, in fact, in all Englishspeaking countries, which had been maintained tives of the people of New Zealand, and, if sent in the past with no such law as this to enforce in that condition to the other House, would it; and the only part of this country where

there had been any cause for reflecting on the non-observance of the Sabbath Day was that very part of the country where there was a law in existence strictly prohibiting the breaking of the Sabbath. He had no objection to the ordinance which was in existence in Auckland, but had very great objection to the clause as it was now amended in this Bill, which was even stricter and more drastic than the ordinance in force in Otago. There was a still further reason why they should not pass the Bill at the present time. A Commission had been appointed to revise the statutes, and he considered that that Commission had no right to include in its duties the revision of the ordinances of any one or two of the provincial districts. The power which was delegated to them was to revise the general statutes of New Zealand, and not the ordinances of particular districts. Still, the Commission had gone as far as it thought wise in including the provisions of the provincial ordinances, and yet when the Bill came to the House a Select Committee went even still further. This was therefore not, strictly speaking, a revision of statutes, but adding to our statutes an obsolete provision, and bringing in a principle in the nineteenth century which he, as a free man, had every right to object to. The principle contained in this clause had never been fairly debated. On the first occasion upon which the first part of the clause was carried there were only about thirty-six or thirty-seven members in the Chamber; and then, when the remaining part of the clause was under consideration, at the very commencement of the proceedings it was determined—by an absolute majority of 10 or 15—that the clause should be rejected; but, then, those who supported the principle of manufacturing offences and of making people good by Act of Parliament used a great deal of diplomacy and said, "Oh, amend the clause, and ultimately we will reject it." It was amended to the extent of not making it so drastic as it was at first, because the penalty was reduced from £10 to £1; but, by a little by-play, a majority was secured, and the clause was carried. Perhaps the temper of honourable members was not as pleasant on that occasion as it was now; and all he wanted was to have a fair expression of the opinion of the whole House. A number of honourable gentlemen had gone away not knowing that this Bill would come on, as there were resolutions on the Order Paper which it was thought would occupy a considerable time. Therefore he hoped the House would not come to a decision until there were more members present to say whether or not the liberties of the subject were to be interfered with in the way proposed. If a majority of the House were in favour of it, then, although he should regret that their intelligence should arrive at such a conclusion, he would feel bound to submit to it; but he hoped that — with the means of education in our midst, and with the intelligence that existed among the communitythey would not take away a man's freedom on the only day of rest: if they so decreed, it was

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an instance of fanaticism and bigotry. Then, it should be remembered that we had amongst us a race who were respected for their historical record, but who did not agree with us as to which should be the Sabbath Day; and yet we were going to say to them that they must, as we thought fit, observe our Sabbath Day, and we should thereby be putting them at a great disadvantage, though they never tried to force their convictions upon us. What had the intelligence of the Judicial Bench of Great Britain decided? There, the Act of Charles II., which was by no means so drastic as this, was absolutely obsolete, and on every occasion on which a case came up the Magistrates had decided against committals under it. Custom had altogether abrogated that class of legisla-tion; and, if we, the superior Parliament of New Zealand, were to go back for our legislation to the dark ages of the stake and the faggot, he did not know what would come next. He had hoped, however, that the increase of education, a more enlightened public opinion, the spread of liberalism, and the inculcation of a broader spirit of charity had brought about a better state of affairs. But what was the reward to the great public educator, the Press? The very first opportunity the Legislature got, it passed a law to provide that any person taking part in the production of a Monday morning newspaper should be guilty of an offence, and be liable to be prosecuted by any person holding the narrow views that were held by some members of the House. He noticed, too, that persons who were connected with newspapers printed in the afternoon voted against exempting morning newspapers from the opera-tion of the Act. Did not that show narrowmindedness? It showed a spirit of intolerance which he hoped members of the House would not stand. That circumstance alone should induce honourable members to agree with him and vote against the Bill. The clause, however, went further than that. Under it a barber might shave up to nine o'clock in the morning on Sunday; but that which was a good Christian act up to nine o'clock, after that hour became an offence against the laws of the country. What right had the House to go against Holy Writ, and say Sunday in this case commenced at a certain hour? To look at the matter in its ridiculous aspect, he would point out that, if a barber by nine o'clock had shaved only one side of a customer's face, he must then stop, for fear of the consequences of going further; and the customer must go his way with one side shaved and the other with hairs standing out like quills upon a porcupine. Therefore there would be seen two sides to the question. Under the Bill the milkman was exempt. He could serve his customers at any hour, not merely to nine o'clock, but up to twelve o'clock, if he liked, without committing any offence. Then, liked, without committing any offence. there was the case of the drover - he also was exempt. And he (Mr. Seddon) was very much amused at what took place when the drover's name was mentioned. The moment it was proposed to exempt drovers there was a general consensus of opinion in favour of it.

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The bare mention of sheep or cattle in that Chamber seemed to have a great charm for a number of honourable members, and as soon as the exemption was proposed it was agreed to. Some who had taken no interest in the Bill at once did so, and others who had supported it would support it no longer unless the exemption were made. But when, a few minutes after, a motion was made to exempt mining operations in extreme cases on the Sabbath Day, the gentlemen who had voted to exempt the travelling of stock on Sunday voted against the motion, which was accordingly lost by a large majority. He would point out to the House how unjust this was. The barber and the milkman made their profit all the week, and yet were allowed to make profit on Sunday: but the miners were treated differently. Although they might have been waiting for weeks for water, if it rained on Saturday night they would have to walk about with their hands in their pockets until Monday morning. He knew cases in which miners had actually gone two or three months without working, because no rain had fallen; and without rain, or water, mining operations could not be carried on. But, if rain came on a Saturday or a Sunday, the miner who had been waiting for two or three months for rain must walk about with his hands in his pockets, unable to use the water, or to store it for future use. He was sure that, if miners were compelled to do that, they would not thank the Legislature of New Zealand for passing such a law. It seemed to him that they were creating offences merely for the sake of punishing those offences. He felt satisfied that, if this Bill had been suggested at the last general election, gentlemen who were standing as candidates would not have dared to support it.
Mr. HOBBS.—One would.

Mr. SEDDON supposed the honourable gentleman was referring to himself; but he very much doubted whether the honourable gentleman would have had the courage to tell his constituents that he was desirous of going the length that this Bill went. Would the honourable gentleman have dared to tell his constituents that he would support a measure which would have the effect of preventing boys having a game of cricket on Sunday? take the case of two or three boys who happened to meet in the street, each having a few marbles in his pocket. One would put a marble down, and another would put a marble down to have a shot. A policeman came up behind, took one boy by the collar, and walked him off to the station, or took his name, and next morning the boy was fined. It might be a nominal fine, but, nevertheless, there it stood against the boy's character for life. There was a criminal record against him. the honourable gentleman be in the House that night if he had stated he would support such a Bill? He (Mr. Seddon) believed he would not. Although the Bay of Islands folks were a long-suffering people, they would not have stood that. Then, there was another phase of the question, and that was this: Did

honourable members who were most anxious for this clause conform to it themselves? Was it complied with even within the precincts of the Parliament Buildings? They would insist on having their comforts on the Sabbath as well as on other days. Were not the messengers, the Librarian, the clerks all kept at work on the Sabbath? Could not and did not honourable members get their creature comforts or whatever they might want on the Lord's Day? Did they not keep persons there to supply those wants? Most decidedly they did; and they were actually one evening insisting on this clause being included, and yet, at the same time, those members were parties to its violation. Honourable members of the legal profession who were taking an active part in the introduction of this clause, when they wanted May's Constitutional Practice, did not think anything whatever of keeping the Librarian for a couple of hours searching for it on the Sabbath Day; they did not think it a vio-lation of the law to go and peruse that book, for use on the first occasion: but honourable members like himself, holding strong views on this matter-believing it was against the true principles of liberalism, and an interference with the rights of the people—were put down as something very bad. He would never forget as long as he lived the excessive temper shown by honourable members simply because, on a recent occasion, he differed from them. It showed him plainly enough that the intolerance of the past was not exactly buried, and that it existed strongly in New Zealand, and made him feel all the more strongly that a Bill of this kind should not be given effect to. Then, they were told by some honourable members that the police and the Magistrates would never enforce it. Then, why pass it? Why leave it in the power of some bigoted police officer, or bigoted Magistrate or Justice of the Peace, to enforce such a law, when it was admitted that it was not necessary? To members who used that argument he would read a paragraph from a newspaper published, not in the seventeenth century, but in Wellington, on Saturday, the 25th October, 1884. It was as follows:

"The police have acted in a most extraordinary, illegal, and tyrannical manner towards Mr. Foster, who proposed to give a sacred concert to-morrow evening in the Theatre Royal. Being informed, after the arrangements had been made, that the police would object, Mr. Foster on Thursday wrote to Inspector Shearman asking if he would be interfered with. Mr. Shearman replied next day that the question had been submitted to the Crown Law Officers, but that their reply could not be obtained in time, and that, should the concert be held, the police would take proceedings in ordinary course. On receipt of this intimation, Mr. Foster, although he had gone to considerable expense, abandoned his arrangements. This morning, however, he received another letter from Inspector Shearman, stating 'that, in accordance with instructions received from the Government, the police would not take any steps to interfere

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with the proposed concert.' This was, of course, too late to enable Mr. Foster to go on with the concert. We should much like to know by what authority Inspector Shearman threatened to prosecute Mr. Foster if he gave the concert, or under what law he could possibly do so. Entertainments of the same kind have frequently been given here, and never interfered with; and in using the threat he did Inspector Shearman greatly exceeded his duty. Unless convinced that a Sunday concert was illegal he had no right to threaten a prosecution, and before doing so he should have obtained the advice of the Crown Law Officers, if he was in doubt. His most improper action has caused Mr. Foster much loss and annoyance."

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That was a complete answer to the argument that the police, Magistrates, or Justices of the Peace would not enforce this clause. Here they found the police not enforcing the law, but, believing it was in their power, they actually prevented a free and enlightened citizen from giving a sacred concert. Sacred music exalted the mind, and was introduced to assist religious services. Well, here was a sacred concert proposed to be held in the Empire Oity, while both Houses of the Legislature were sitting, and they found the police inter-fering, and so it was prevented. Free-thought lectures and open blasphemy were permitted and countenanced, yet a sacred concert was stopped. If this law had been passed the concert would certainly have been prohibited. Every time the professional organist plays at church on Sunday he would commit an offence. Such an interference with the liberty of the subject strengthened the position he took up. He felt, in fighting this battle, that he was fighting against a majority; but he protested against the action of that majority. He had been brought up a Protestant; he was a good Protestant; and he was simply upholding that which others belonging to his faith were punished years ago for upholding. It was only by this that things were brought to a proper level, and that right and justice triumphed over might, intolerance, and bigotry. He knew that at this period of the session consideration was due to honourable members; but it was not the cattle show or the races in Christchurch—it was not that honourable members' business was neglected—that would cause him to forget the duty he owed to his constituents. When he put himself before the electors of Kumara he undertook to do his duty to them fearlessly and without favour, and he had done so. When this measure was brought forward the Premier told them that, taking it as a whole, there were some alterations in the law necessary; there was no debate on the Bill, and it was supposed that the Bill was simply a consolidation of statutes already in existence. Before they proceeded very far, however, they found that there was a departure from the law as it existed at present. They found that members holding very strong opinions introduced alterations in Committee which made this measure far more drastic than the Act of Charles II. ever was.

It was to protest against that he had occupied the time of the House. The Premier said that he agreed with the clause on the same principle as he agreed with the eight-hour system — that they should at all events have one day in the week set apart for rest. He agreed with that, and, as custom had established the eight-hour system, so custom, religion, advancement, intelligence, and education had said that there should be one day's rest, and that it should be the seventh day. He would ask the Premier to take this view of the question: Was he not a staunch supporter of the secular system of edu-cation? Were not a majority of the House also supporters of the secular system? And what was the strong point on which they defended it? Simply, that they had no right to interfere with the consciences of others. They wished to give freedom—liberty—and not introduce theology into the public schools. That was the basis on which they said they had their great and glorious system of public education; but, in the next breath, the same honourable members, on account of their theological views, said that freedom of action should be taken from the people on Sunday. One honourable gentleman the other day said that no one could take the future partner of his joys and sorrows for a walk in a public park on Sunday—and that was a very pleasant occupation. If, when he was in Melbourne some years ago, he had gone into a public park on Sunday, and had sat down under a wattle-tree alongside a stream with his future partner, and if it was said that by so doing he was committing an offence, and he was brought before the Magistrate's Court on the Monday morning, any man of commonsense would abhor the operation of such a law. Yet this Bill when introduced went to that extent. He had moved that the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of reconsidering clause 13. All he wished was to have the question decided while a good number of members were present. It would not take five minutes to expunge that clause, or, at all events, to take a division on it. If a majority decided not to recommit the Bill, then that majority would be parties to enacting this clause, which, to his mind, was an infringement of the rights of the people.

Mr. W. D. STEWART said a good deal of zeal had been displayed by the honourable member for Kumara in resisting this clause, and no doubt he showed a certain amount of ability in trying to get it eliminated; but, if there was one thing more than another which should be dear to the working-men as their inheritance, it was the Sunday. It was the day above all others that the working-men prized, and which above all others working-men should be protected in having. The moment they obliterated the Sunday they abolished one of the best institutions this country ever had, or could have, in the interest of the working-man. He wondered that the honourable member for Kumara, who generally took a liberal view of matters, should have shown such extraordinary zeal in endeavouring to crush anything like Sunday observance. No one would object to the honourable member sitting under a wattle-tree or any other tree with any one he liked on Sunday; but what they wished to carry out was this: that the Sunday should be observed as a day of rest, and that those who wished to disturb others should not have the opportunity of doing so. He might refer to Adam Smith, Lord Macaulay, Edmund Burke, Coleridge, and a large number of other eminent men, all of whom were of opinion that the Sunday was one of the best boons the nation had ever had. He hoped the House would stand by the Bill, which he believed would be very moderate in its operation.

Mr. STOUT hoped the House would not recommit the Bill. This clause took, he believed, three different nights so that it might be thoroughly discussed. He thought it better that the Bill should remain in its present state. One good point in the Bill was that no bar was to be opened on Sundays, so that this would get rid of the bona-fide-traveller ques-tion being raised hereafter. That, he thought, was a great gain in this Bill. He would point out also that this Bill only affected those who worked or carried on business within view of the public. It was not a Bill to promote a day of rest; it was simply a Bill to prevent people being shocked on Sundays by seeing other people at work. The Bill could therefore do no harm, and he hoped it would be read a third time.

Mr. LEVESTAM would not have attempted to make a remark but for the observations of the Premier, who said there would be no bonafide-traveller question hereafter. He (Mr. Levestam) had asked the Premier whether the totalizator could be used, and the Premier replied that it could under another Act. If another Act provided that a bar might be opened on Sunday, by the same reasoning this Bill would not prevent it.

Mr. STOUT said it was a well-known principle of law that a general law would not override a special enactment. The word "bar" was specially mentioned in this Bill.

Mr. LEVESTAM said it appeared to him that this Bill was only making work for the lawyers, and therefore he could quite understand why the Premier should defend it. The honourable member for Kumara had related an occurrence which took place in Wellington, and where the police interpreted the law in a wrong way; and he (Mr. Levestam) did not know what would be the consequences if the party had sued the police for damage. He was simply prevented, through the action of the Police Inspector, from doing a thing which by law he was entitled to do; and similar difficulties might arise under this measure. He trusted the House would recommit the Bill, because, amongst other absurdities which the honourable member for Kumara had drawn attention to, a clergyman would not be permitted to preach in a public street, which he did not think he should be debarred from doing. The cathedral bells at Christchurch, which

were kept ringing on week-days, would have to be silent on Sundays.

The House divided.

AYES, 59. Hakuene Allwright Rolleston Atkinson Hamlin Ross Ballance Russell Harper Hatch Shephard Barron Beetham Hirst, H. Smith Lake B.-Bradshaw Steward, W. J. Bruce Locke Stout Bryce Macandrew Sutter Buckland, J. C. McKenzie, J. Buckland, W.F. McMillan Taiaroa Te Ao Cadman Mitchelson Thompson, T. Conolly Moat Thomson, J.W. Cowan Montgomery Tole Turnbull Dargaville Moss Newman Walker Dodson Duncan Peacock White, W. Fraser Pere Whyte, J. B. Tellers. Fulton Reese Richardson, E. Hobbs Gillies Richardson, G. Stewart, W. D. Grigg Noes, 16. Mackenzie, M. Shrimski Brown Menteath Trimble. Buchanan O'Callaghan Fitzherbert Tellers. Guinness Ormond

> Samuel Seddon. Majority for, 43.

Bevan

Pearson

Joyce Levestam

Amendments agreed to, and Bill read a third time.

LAND BILL. IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 4.—Repeal of power to sell pastoral lands on deferred payments.

The Committee divided on the question,

"That the clause stand part of the Bill."

	AYES, 51.	
Atkinson	Joyce	Russell
Ballance	Lake	Samuel .
Bevan	Lance	Seddon
BBradshaw	Larnach	Shepha <b>rd</b>
Brown	Locke	Shrimski
Conolly	Mackenzie, M.	Sutter
Cowan	Menteath	Thompson, T.
Dargaville	Moat	Thomson, J. W.
Dodson	Moss	Tole
Fraser	Newman	Trimble
Fulton	O'Conor	Wakefield
Garrick	Peacock	Walker
Gillies	Pere	Whyte, J. B.
Grigg	Richardson, E.	
Harper	Richardson, G.	Telle <b>rs.</b>
Hatch	Rolleston	Pearson
Hirst, H. Hobbs	Ross	Pyke.

Noes, 19. Steward, W. J. Barron Guinness Turnbulĺ Johnston Beetham Bruce McMillan White, W. Buchanan Montgomery Buckland, J. C. Ormond Tellers. Cadman Reese Duncan Fitzherbert Smith . McKenzie, J. Majority for, 32

Clause retained.

Clause 5 .- Repeal of section 9 of Act of 1879, and substitution of six years as period of residence on deferred-payment section for three years.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

#### AYES, 31.

Levestam	Stewart, W. D.
McMillan	Stout
Montgomery	Thompson, T.
Moss	Thomson, J. W.
O'Callaghan	Tole
O'Conor	Trimble
Peacock	White, W.
Pearson	·
Rolleston	Tellers.
Seddon	Barron
Steward, W. J	. Pyke.
	McMillan Montgomery Moss O'Callaghan O'Conor Peacook Pearson Rolleston Seddon

Nors, 21.

Beetham Lake Ross Bruce Lance Samuel Buchanan McKenzie, J. Walker Wilson. Duncan Newman Gillies Ormond Tellers. Grigg Reese Buckland, J. C. Richardson, G. Mackenzie, M. Guinness Johnston

Majority for, 10.

Clause retained.

Clause 8.—Deferred-payment selector, notwithstanding that, under "The Land Act 1877 Amendment Act, 1882," he may have paid the whole of capitalized value of his unpaid payments, not to be entitled to grant until

expiration of term for which license granted.
Sir G. GREY moved, That the further consideration of the clause be postponed.

The Committee divided.

AYES, 10.		
Beetham	Lance	Wilson.
Buchanan	McKenzie, J.	
Buckland, W.F.	. Mitchelson	Tellers.
Duncan	Newman	Buckland, J. C.
Gillies	Reese	Mackenzie, M.

Gillies	Reese	Mackenzie, M.
	Nozs, 36.	
Ballance	Јоусе	Seddon
Barron	Lake	Steward, W. J.
BBradshaw	Levestam	Stewart, W. D.
Brown	McMillan	Stout
Bruce	Moat	Thompson, T.
Conolly	Montgomery	Thomson, J. W.
Fergus	O'Callaghan	Tole
Fitzherbert	O'Conor	Trimble
Fulton	Peacock	Walker.
Grigg	Richardson, G.	Tellers.
Guinness	Rolleston	Pearson
Harper	Ross	Pyke.
Hatch		•

Majority against, 23.

Motion lost

Clause 16.—Leases of runs in the vicinity of settled districts.

Mr. J. McKENZIE moved, That progress be reported.
The Committee divided.

AYES, 17.

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Beetham	Hatch	Newman
Bruce	Hursthouse	Reese
Buckland, W.F.	. Lake	Richardson, G.
Duncan	Levestam	Tellers.
Gillies	Mackenzie, M.	Buckland, J. C.
Harper	Mitchelson	McKenzie, J.

Noes, 23.

	21020, 201	
Ballance	Moat	Thomson, J. W.
Barron	O'Callaghan	Tole
Brown	Peacock	Trimble
Conolly	Pearson	Walker
Fergus	Rolleston	White, W.
Guinness	Ross	Tellers.
Joyce	Stout	O'Conor
McMillan	Thompson, T.	Steward, W. J.

PAIRS.

For.	Against.
Grey	Shrimski
Hirst, H.	Shephard
Hobbs	Richardson, E.
Taiaroa	Locke
Wilson.	Montgomery.

Majority against, 6.

Mr. J. McKENZIE moved, That progress be reported.

The Committee divided.

#### AYES, 11.

Bruce	Hatch	Reese.
Buchanan	Levestam	Tellers.
Buckland, J. C.	Mackenzie, M.	Hursthouse
Gillies	Newman	McKenzie, J.
	Nove 95	

NOES, 25. Ballance McMillan Thompson, T. Beetham Moat Thomson, J. B.-Bradshaw O'Callaghan Tole Conolly Peacock Walker White, W. Pearson Duncan Fergus Rolleston Guinness Ross Tellers. Steward, W. J. Richardson, G. Harper Joyce Stout Trimble.

PAIRS.

For.	Against.
Buckland, W. F.	O'Conor
Grey	Shrimski
Hirst, H.	Shephard
Hobbs	Richardson, E.
Lake	Barron
Taiaroa	Locke
Wilson.	Montgomery.

Majority against, 14.

Progress was subsequently reported. The House adjourned at three o'clock a.m.

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, 28th October, 1834.

Government

First Readings—Second Reading—Government Policy Measures—Government Insurance Association Bill—East and West Coast (Middle Island) and Nelson Railway and Railways Construction Bill—Greymouth Harbour Board Bill—Westport Harbour Board Bill

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READINGS.

Breach of Trusts Bill, Police Offences Bill,
Bankruptcy Bill.

SECOND READING.

Destitute Persons Bill.

GOVERNMENT POLICY MEASURES. The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—Sir, I do not know whether it is right that I should raise the question I am about to raise as a question of privilege; but, if not, then, to put myself in order, I shall move the adjournment of the Council. The Colonial Secretary was asked yesterday if he had any Ministerial statement to make, as a Ministerial statement had been made in another branch of the Legislature; and the honourable gentleman said he knew nothing about it.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—The honourable gentleman will pardon me if I state that I did not say that I knew nothing about it. I merely asked for information as to what statement was referred to. I did not go

beyond that.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—I do not wish to misrepresent the honourable gentleman, and am quite ready to take his statement. Probably the honourable gentleman was not speaking seriously, as what he said he said in a laughing manner; and I did not catch the full purport of the honourable gentleman's However, when a Ministerial statement is made in another place, it is usual to make it in this Council also; and, seeing that a statement was not made in this Council, it might have been taken for granted, as it was a mysterious statement at all events, that it only applied to the other branch of the Legislature; and I believe that, when that statement was made, it was intended to apply to only the other branch of the Legislature, but, Ministers having got into trouble over it, this Council has been, as in other matters, made a stalkinghorse in regard to it, and now it is said that it applies to the Council only.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUČKLEY.—I rise to order. I think the honourable gentleman is out of order in referring to anything which has taken place in another branch of the Legislature. It is not usual to echo here every statement made there, unless it is of some importance; but, in any case, the Government take the responsibility as to whether it is made or not made here. I merely ask your ruling, Sir, as to whether the honourable gentleman is in

order.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—Before you rule, Sir, I wish to say that a statement affecting this Council was made by two Ministers of the Crown, and I hold that, under the circumstances, I have a perfect right to refer to it.

The Hon. the SPEAKER.—No doubt the general rule is vory clear, and ought to be very carefully observed, that in either branch of the Legislature there should be no direct reference to the other, unless when a message or some other form of communication has taken place. Otherwise we should have the unseemly spectacle of one House talking against the other House, or a member in one branch of the Legislature speaking against a member of another branch of the Legislature; and nothing but trouble could ensue from such a practice. At the same time, I am not prepared to say that, so far as the honourable member has gone, he has put himself out of order.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—I am glad of your ruling, Sir, because it would be impossible for me to refer to matters of which I wish to speak unless I could refer in some way to the other branch of the Legislature; but I will do so as little as possible. I have said the statement I mentioned affected the Council, because the Council is called upon to take a certain amount of odium upon itself in stopping Bills which, naturally, many members of the other House would vote against but for party reasons. Now, although I am an old party man, I can say conscientiously that here I can cast aside all party interests and look at any Bill without the slightest party feeling. It is immaterial to me to whom any Bill belongs: if it is in my opinion a proper Bill I vote for it. I believe, also, that that feeling influences every other honourable member. As far as I know, I could not pick out any honourable member who is not influenced by the same feeling. Now, to come to that part of the statement made elsewhere which refers to the preponderance of North Island members in this Council, which makes it difficult for South Island interests to be protected, let us see how the matter really stands. I wish, however, to point out particularly that the statement when made could have no reference to this Council. I look upon it as meant to bring their party in another place into subjection. But let us see how the thing stands as to the members from each Island in this Council. There are now twenty-four South Island members in this Council, twenty-two from the North Island, and two Natives. Then, as to the alleged preponderating influence of North Island members, I find that, of those who voted for the District Railways Bill, there were four South Island members — of whom I was one — and four North Island members. Against the Bill there were seven South Island members, twelve North Island members, and the two Natives. For the East and West Coast Railway Bill, ten South Island members, six North Island members, and two Maoris voted; while five South and eight North Island members voted against it. These figures therefore show that the statement could have no reference to this Council;

and I think the assertion that it applied only to the Council was a quibble to get out of a difficulty. Now, I have no objection, when people find themselves in a difficulty, to their getting out the best way they can; but I object most strongly to this Council being held up in the way it has been, and I have brought this matter forward so that a statement should not go forth to the country unchallenged that this Council has any other object whatever in dealing with Bills than that of reviewing them on their merits, and rejecting those they disapprove and accepting those they approve. And I hope, Sir, the day will never come when any member of this Council will be influenced one iota by anything said outside, but that we shall go on consistently doing our duty, no matter what the consequences may be, never looking at the consequences, but voting for or against any Bill according to our judgment and Sir, I move the adjournment of conscience. the Council.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY. - Sir, no one recognizes more fully than I do the independence of this Council; and I am quite sure that any observations made in another place were not intended to reflect any discredit or to cast any reflection at all on the members of this Council, because it has been invariably found that this Council has done its duty, and, notwithstanding that sometimes a little fecling may arise, still, as a rule, the Council has always done what was reasonable and fair. If the matter alluded to were one, in my opinion, affecting the Council in any way, I should not be discharging my duty unless I myself brought it to the notice of the Council. But I do not think so; and I do not think that, whatever the honourable gentleman may have heard outside or inside-and no doubt he has heard a great deal-he is acting rightly in attributing motives where none exist.

Motion negatived.

## GOVERNMENT INSURANCE ASSOCIATION BILL.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY .- Sir, in 1869 a measure was passed through Parliament to enable the Government of New Zealand to carry on what is known as the life insurance In 1870 an amending Act was business. passed, which worked for a time not very satisfactorily; and in 1874 an Act, which was considered a perfect Act of the kind, was passed by the Legislature, under which Act the Government Insurance Department has been carried on. Since that time foreign life insurance companies have commenced operations in this colony, and I may say here that, as I am a director in this town of one of those companies, it would not become me to allude to any one company more than to others. They have all, I believe, been very successful in their operations in this colony, and none more so than the one to which I refer—the National Mutual; but any statement by me as to any one company might be considered, coming from a Minister, to be detrimental to the interests of the others. I am quite satisfied,

Hon. Mr. McLean

looking at the number of directors of other life insurance companies who have the privilege of holding seats in this Council, that this matter has received more than ordinary attention. I am quite aware of the fact that there is great difference of opinion as to whether the Government should ever have com-menced the business of life insurance. Upon that point I do not profess to offer an opinion; but I know there is great diversity of opinion on the question. But, having gone so far as we have, it is at least only fair that, in the interests of the policy-holders, we should protect them, and carry on the business on a more satisfactory basis than that on which it has hitherto been carried on. I know a great deal has been said with regard to the management of this institution, and a good deal of blame has been attached to those who have had the management of the business. There is no doubt in my mind that the system on which the Government Life Insurance business has been carried on is not so satisfactory as the manner in which the business is carried on by incorporated associations. I have no hesitation in saying that it is impossible for any Minister at the head of this department to conduct its operations in so satisfactory a way as an incorporated association, with a Board properly constituted, and attending to the business week by week. I speak from experience with regard to the company with which I am connected in saying that it is to the supervision exercised by the Board over the management of the business that its success is largely duo; and I say it is physically impossible for a Minister at the head of the department to manage such an institution as the Government Life Insurance Department. From information supplied to me, I understand that the present proposal is hailed with pleasure by every policy-holder in the department, and that there is nothing but general satisfaction from end to end of the country at the prospect of having this large institution placed on a more satisfactory footing. From information furnished me, I find that, since the department began operations, £282,000 has been paid away, that the annual income of the department is now £232,000, and that nearly a million of money has already accrued and is available for any purpose for which it may be required. Now, the object of this Bill is to incorporate as an association the holders of policies under "The Covernment Insurance and Annuities Act, 1874;" and the rest of the Bill is mere machinery. As to the constitution of the Board, it may be objected, perhaps, that there is too much of the Government element on it; but, when honourable members bear in mind the large responsibility which the Government undertake in relation to this matter, I do not think there will be any objection to the number of nominees, so to speak, it is proposed to put on this Board. At the same time, in order to see if the principle may work out satisfactorily, it is considered advisable to have a number of elective members. Honourable members will see provision is made for Local Boards of three members each, one

member to be appointed by the Central Board, and two to be elected by the policy-holders in the district over which the Local Board has control. That is considered a desirable course, so as not to centre the whole thing in one place; and, besides, I am assured that by this course the institution will enlist the sympathies of people who otherwise would probably not take any very great interest in its success. There are the usual provisions with regard to rendering accounts, audit, holding property, the banking account, and so forth; and power is given to the Governor in Council to regulate the business of the Board. One provision—section 72—I wish specially to call the attention of the Council to. It reads,—

"Out of the net surplus of profits found to be available for distribution at each quinquennial investigation, in respect of contracts entered into after the thirty-first day of December, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, the Board shall, in the first instance, and prior to any distribution of such profits, set apart, as a reserve by way of guarantee, a sum of one-tenth of such net surplus, which sum shall be paid into the Public Account to a separate account to be called the Insurance Guarantee Fund Account; and all moneys to the credit of such Guarantee Fund Account shall be invested as the Governor in Council may direct.

"All contributions from surplus profits to the Guarantee Fund shall cease so soon as the accumulations in such fund have reached the amount of one million pounds sterling."

That is not for the purpose of depriving the policy-holder of any guarantee to which he is now entitled, but for the purpose of placing the Government in, if possible, a safer position in the event of any accident: not that there is any idea of an accident, but if, on the one hand, the Government are to give a guarantee, on the other hand the Government itself should at least have some suitable guarantee. As I have said, the object of the Bill is to incorporate the institution; and, as the bulk of the measure is mere machinery clauses, to which, in Committee, probably honourable members will give all the attention they deserve, I will now content myself with moving the second reading of the Bill.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN. — Sir, in reading this Bill it looks different from some other measures which have been put before us, as it appears to be carefully drawn and considered all through. I hail with satisfaction the proposal to put the management of the department on a better basis, because, as the Hon. the Colonial Secretary has said, it is utterly impossible for a Minister of the Crown to look after such an enormous business, with the other duties he has on his hands. Although there are some portions of the Bill to which I think one may take exception, still I think that, on the whole, the measure is one which may well be accepted by the Council. The system on which the life insurance business has been carried on by the Government, and as to which the private com-panies have followed suit — I speak, like the Hon, the Colonial Secretary, from some experi-

ence, having been connected with one of them of late-especially as to canvassing and several other things, is a system which is not creditable to the Government or to the companies either; and, if putting the management of the institution under the control of a Board will lead to a course of procedure in those respects which can be commended rather than otherwise, I say this Bill should be passed. I may say here that I am one of those who do not believe in the Government doing anything which any one else can do, and I believe it is a pity that this department was ever started. No doubt it brings a large amount of money into the coffers of the Government, and that may have been a principal inducement to first entering into the business. But, apart from that, I believe its management can be very much improved by putting it under a Board, so that its business may receive that attention which the business of private companies gets, but which the business of the Government Department cannot get now. I do not wish to say this with a view of doing away with the concern: we have it in existence, and we must carry it on at the present time, whatever may come afterward. But there are a number of other companies started on the principle of mutual advantage to the policy-holders on terms as favourable as those of the Government, and, so long as we see companies conducted in a solvent manner, that should be sufficient for the requirements of the people. Now, while the Government have been carrying on this business, the companies have, rightly or wrongly, from whatever cause, got a feeling that their secrets are being made known through the Post Office and Telegraph, not by any direct viola-tion of secrecy, but indirectly. What is com-plained of is that the local agents, who get a commission from the Government, take a note of the names of persons to whom letters from insurance companies are addressed, and wait on them to show that the Government insurance terms are better than the companies' terms, and in that way canvassing is said to be carried on. I cannot say that that is a fact; but companies competing with the Government have taken their monograms off the envelopes, and everything from the back of the envelopes that would indicate that it was a letter from an insurance company, so that the letter should go without it being known from whom it came. I think, if what the companies complain of is really done, that it is a very unfair sort of competition, and a kind of competition that this Board will not tolerate. I think it was an omission on the part of the Colonial Secretary, but I should like to draw attention to the fact that it is proposed to go into an important business under this Bill which has never been touched before. I am sure his attention has never been drawn to it, or he would have referred to it; and I am sure no portion of the Legislature would have agreed to it. It is that the Government shall undertake accident insurance. They propose, in clause 38, to go into accident insurance, a business which there are no statistics to control—it is purely a

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[COUNCIL.]

matter of gambling, for there are no statistics from which to estimate profits or anything else: it is merely a matter of luck. Then, there are two accident insurance companies in the colony already, and there is no necessity for the Government undertaking such business. are now, for sixpence, insuring you on the railways for £500, and I do not think this House would pass a clause providing for business of that sort. I am sure this has crept in without the Government being aware of it, for they might as well commence any other kind of speculation. Then, there is the question of investment on freeholds. I do not know that you can separate this Board from the Government, and, if you are going to make advances on the freehold lands of the country, I am not sure that it is a very good style of investment, and I should say the Government should keep to their own bonds and make investments in them, as the simplest plan. Supposing that is not done, agents will have to go round the country looking at this estate and that estate, and you will get Government insurance properties. Every institution gets hold of these things in time, whether it wants them or not, and if it does not like them has to take it. Then, Sir, there is the question of the limit of the amount of insurance. Of course that is left entirely to Orders in Council; but I do not know whether this Council should put a limit to the amount of risk the country is to run on one life, or not. You may find a Government who make insurance a hobby, as the late Colonial Treasurer made it; and I think he went too far: I have no belief in his national insurance scheme. Under such circumstances it would be well to have a limit in the Bill. I am not prepared at the present moment to say what that limit should be: that will be a matter to be discussed in Committee, and then we shall see the opinion of members upon it. Then, as to the question of guarantee. Of course, so far as the present insurers are concerned, the Government has made a considerable deviation from the Act of 1874, under which they insured, because they are to participate in the profits. However, I think the proposal is not unreasonable, that the Bill is a well-drafted and comprehensive measure, and that it is a Bill which will commend itself to this House.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—I shall support the second reading of this Bill, because I admit that it is a step in the right direction. My objection to it is that it does not go far enough in that direction. I am one of those who, from the first, have been opposed to the system of Government insurance, excepting to a limited extent, on behalf of the labouring-class, as it is carried out in England. I think, in entering into the Government insurance, and in the manner in which it is now carried out, we have gone entirely beyond the functions of a Government; and I am further of opinion that the sooner we retrace our steps the better. Being of this opinion, I had proposed to move an addition—a rider expressive of these views—to the present motion; but I find it would be out of order were I to do so.

The rider that I proposed to move at the end of the motion proposed by the Hon. the Colonial Secretary is to this effect: "but, at the same time, the Council records its opinion that it is desirable that the present connection between the Government and the Insurance Association should terminate as soon as is compatible with the interest of existing policyholders." It would be out of order for me to move that now, and I shall therefore take an early opportunity of bringing the matter distinctly under the notice of the Council. I believe that the sooner we retrace our steps in this matter the better, and, if anything could impress that view still more strongly upon me than my previous conviction, it would be the action of the Insurance Association during the last few months. It appears to me their proceedings in the "touting" business have been something in the nature of a scandal, and must have been injurious to the interests of the Association itself, inasmuch as it shows that there is an amount of competition existing that must have its effect in leading to the acceptance of lives of not the most desirable kind. Sir, I am glad to see that the Government recognize that there is some change required, and that they propose to put this important institution on a less dependent footing than it has been on hitherto; but, still, I take objection to many of the details of the Bill, and to my mind it is one of the greatest of the objections that in the future it is to be presided over by a political officer like the Colonial Treasurer. It is utterly impossible that he can free himself from political instincts—from party associations—or that it can be compatible with the efficient performance of his other very onerous duties, that he should be the active presider over the interests of the Association, the keen watcher over its various transactions, which the chairman of such an association should be. I think it is a matter of the highest importance to the Association that we should make a change in the chairmanship of the Board to be created for the management of this Association; and when the Bill is in Committee I shall propose a change in that direction, with a view to providing that the Association be presided over as Chairman by no less important an officer of the Government than the Controller-General, who is an officer free from political pressure, and an officer of the Legislature. I think no better appointment than that could be made to the chairmanship of an institution of this very important character. The duties devolving upon the Chairman will be very great indeed, and he should be more frequently at his post than, I venture to think, the Colonial Treasurer can make it convenient to be, especially during the sitting of Parliament. He should be acquainted with all the mortgages entered upon, and should be able to follow the changes in the value o land, in order that he might appreciate properly the safety of mortgages that he has entered into on behalf of the society; and altogether his duties will be of so onerous and so important a character that it would be utterly impossible

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that, with any degree of efficiency or with any due regard to the interests of the Association, they should be performed by a Chairman who is in office to-day and may be out of office tomorrow, and who, when in office, is subject to the worst of all influences—that is, political pressure. When the Bill was introduced it was a part of the scheme of the Government that insurance policies should be taken outside the colony — that we should have our agencies scattered over the face of the earth "touting for business in other countries, as this Association has "touted" for business in this colony. It is generally believed that that objectionable rovision has been altogether erased from this Bill; but, as a matter of fact, such is not the case. There is no express statement that the agents of this Insurance Association may go outside this colony and push their business elsewhere; but there is no limitation placed upon their power of doing so. Under the 38th clause the Board may enter into any contracts whatever, and under the 39th clause the Board may appoint branch offices and agencies wherever they like. There is no limitation whatever upon their powers; and, if in the future they are to press their business as they have done in the past, you may depend upon it that the Board, sooner or later, will be establishing their agencies outside the colony. I think it is a matter of the utmost importance to us that, at any rate, when the Bill is in Committee, we should limit the power of the Board to go outside the colony. Then, referring to the point already alluded to by the Hon. Mr. McLean, I am not by any means certain that it is not desirable, in the Bill itself, to limit the amount that should be insured upon a single life. I believe that at the present time it is £3,000. Until recently the highest policy in the Mutual Insurance Company was £5,000: now I think they have expended the sure of th tended it from £5,000 to £10,000. Seeing the enormous capital at their command, and the immense extent of their reserve fund, perhaps they are justified in taking much higher amounts of insurance than any other company, certainly in this colony, and almost in the world. I will not occupy the time of the Council by referring to any other matters, but when the Bill is in Committee I shall bring to the notice of the Committee the various points of the different clauses on which I think it is desirable that amendments should be made. I will only repeat my preliminary observation, by saying that it is my intention to bring the subject distinctly under the notice of the Council by a resolution; and I hope it will not be long before we see this Association placed upon an entirely independent footing—placed in a position to manage their own affairs in their own way, and upon terms which they may think promotive of their own interests, the Government merely preserving its guarantee as regards policies already entered into, and retaining for this purpose a degree of supervision which will be necessary in order to prevent that guarantee from being abused.

The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE. - Sir.

the Colonial Insurance Department is a most. anomalous institution, and if one thing could make it appear more so than another it is the remark of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, who alluded to it as a company: and, in point of fact, it is a company, and not a department. But that is only one of a great many things upon which there is always something to be said on the other side. Up to a certain amount I believe it is desirable to have a Government Insurance Department in a country to which necessarily so many immigrants are comingso many persons who do not know what may be a safe security out here; and if it had been limited to £500 I think that would have been a reasonable sum, and would have answered all the purposes for which Government interference was justifiable. And I think, if it had been fixed to a small amount like that, the Government would not have been tempted to show grander results than other companies that had not the same advantage as they had; and they would not, perhaps, have permitted the spectacle often seen now of insurance agents accosting one directly one gets out of a carriage or arrive at a station, wanting to take one's life. This sort of annoyance goes on all over the country, and is not a very respectable kind of thing for a Government to engage in. Then, what is gained by it? The colony has given its guarantee without the slightest prospect of recouping itself, as all the profits are given away by introducing the mutual principle. The fact is, it ought not to be a mutual office atall. It ought to be simply an insurance at the cheapest rate that can be considered safe, and whatever little margin of profit there might be should go to the State that gives the guarantee. I have no doubt about that. But that is not exactly what this Bill, which I congratulate the Government on having brought in, seeks to do. There are details that point rather in that direction, but the Bill itself does not go so far, though in some respects an excellent Bill. The constitution of the present Insurance Department is the most unsatisfactory thing we have in connection with the Government of the colony. It is most thoroughly unsatisfactory, and, if anything were wanted to show that, it would be found by any honourable gentleman who would peruse the evidence given before the Trust Funds Committee—by some of the officers of that department and by other witnesses-of investments in connection with it. To my mind it is entirely incompatible to have the head of the Insurance Department a Cabinet Minister, and to hold another person responsible; for it is quite evident that things may take place which the nominal head of the department may not hear of, done by an officer who has theoretically no more power than an Under-Secretary, and who is meant to be the Under-Secretary of the Insurance Department. The Insurance Department is a convenience to the Treasurer of the colony: that is, it has been so worked all through. Now, that is not what was intended. When we allowed that Bill topass—as we unwillingly did, a great many of us-our idea was that it was entirely done in-

the interests of the people who were strangers out here, who wished to make provision for their families and could not as yet trust any institutions in the colony, as they had not the information to enable them to form an opinion; but what it has been degraded to is just this: that, if the Treasurer has a friend, a supporter, or a constituent, it is perfectly in his power to take anything his friend has got by way of security, mention it at a meeting of the Executive Council, go through the form of filling up an Order in Council which is seen by no one, and give an order to the Insurance Department that a certain amount of money must go in that direction. The reform proposed is very good as an administrative reform, no doubt; but the reform that we want is for a first-class man, thoroughly trained in these things, to be brought from England or from the Australian Colonies, or wherever such a man can be got, and made entirely independent of the Government in the management of this department. I do not approve of the Auditor-General, the Colonial Treasurer, or anybody connected with the Government, holding the position, but of the appointment of a first-class business-man, holding office during good behaviour, at whatever salary may be required; and I am sure, if we are to continue our responsibility to this department, that is the direction in which the chief of all reforms must be made. The new proposal for taking mortgages is one that will require a good deal of consideration in Committee. I am not sure, if the direct personal connection between the Treasurer and the department is to be kept up, that that is at all a desirable provision, and I think that what we, as a Council, ought to introduce into the Bill is a provision that a large proportion of the accumulated funds should be always invested in readily realizable securities in the colony or in England. If these securities were in England, and by any accident any great demand upon the department were made, touching the cable would put the department in funds at any time. Then, I may say that, with other honourable gentlemen, I look with some alarm at the proposal for widening the area of this kind of business-going into the accident insurance. It is one of those things that catch some people's ideas; but, if we divest ourselves entirely of the notion that there is any credit or advantage to be got by the colony doing an immense business, we shall come to see that we need not try to increase our business by going beyond the borders of the colony or by taking accident insurance risks. For accident insurance being undertaken by the Government there cannot be any justification excepting one I have heard of which is supposed to be recommended when a great number of accidents occur on a railway—that of putting a director in the van. I dare say, if the Government were largely interested in accident insurance, that might be some protection to the travelling public; otherwise I see no advantage to be gained by the country undertaking accident insurance. I think the honourable gentleman, when he told us about divulging the secrets of the Telegraph

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and Post Office Department, was possibly, and I hope probably, going beyond anything that had occurred; but I must say, as the subject has incidentally come up, that I think, now have a new Government, who have no "past" to reproach them, it may fairly be said that it would be a good thing if in all the confidence departments of the Government there was little more care taken than is supposed to be taken. Honourable gentlemen in this Council may know, and a great many do know, that there is a leakage somewhere sometimes where there certainly ought not to be. I do not want to say more on the subject, but that is a reform which will be appreciated when it is made. have nothing particular to say upon the Bill, which I shall support, and, in Committee, I shall endeavour to limit the amount that may be insured; and if it is proposed to make it clear that the business of the insurance department shall be confined to the colony, and that legitimate life assurance only shall be engaged in. I certainly shall support those proposals; and  ${f I}$ certainly hope that somewhere in this Bill we may be able to find some means of introducing a clause rendering it obligatory that a definit proportion of insurance funds shall be invested in colonial debentures.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—There is no doubt, Sir, that such a measure as the present is required; but I must say I am disappointed with the mode it proposes of putting an end to the existing state of things. In the first place, I am certain there was no ground for giving to the policy-holders any representation. In a mutual society it is perfectly reasonable that they should have representation, for there the people practically take the whole responsibilities upon themselves. Now, this is a sort of bastard company, and the Government is responsible for it after all, whatever may happen. However, the mutual principle has been grafted on it. As has been said by a previous speaker, it was a great mistake that the mutual principle was ever embodied in the Government insurance system at all; it should have been conducted on the simple system of the original form of insurance, without any division of profits. But there is another point to which I have great objection, and that is the takingaway of the disabilities under the Disqualifica tion Act, so that members of this Assembly may be qualified for being Directors. That, in reality, gives patronage to an unknown number of offices which it places in the hands of the Government for the time being. That, I think, is too great a power altogether. It is almost certain to cause corruption, and, if it did not I am certain that it would be looked upon that these appointments were made for political support. In Committee I shall move that that clause be struck out. I join in the objections made to the Colonial Treasurer being President of the society. I cannot think it possible that the Colonial Treasurer can have the leisure to attend to the considerable duties imposed by this Bill. I also object to the Colsnial Treasurer being Chairman, on the ground that he will be supreme; and, considering the

large sums this Board will have to deal with, there will be as much influence brought to bear as might lead to investments of a most objectionable nature. If it were possible, I would have the Board appointed outside the Government altogether; but, of course, it will be necessary, seeing that the Government are liable, that a Government officer should be there. But I would have the investment of these funds so removed from the control of the Government as to leave no opportunity for its being said that these investments were made to gain political support. That is sure to be stated, Sir, whether right or not. There are several other points, which, however, I do not think it necessary to go into.

The Hon. Mr. PEACOCK.—I wish to ask your ruling, Sir, in regard to this Bill, as to whether this is a public or a private Bill. It deals with the property of private individuals, and the title of the Bill is "An Act to incorporate as an Association the Holders of Poli-

The Hon. the SPEAKER.—I cannot think for a moment that the Bill is a private Bill. It is of so extensive a character that it must be

regarded as a public Bill.
The Hon. Dr. GRACE.—I must say that, in spite of the way in which the Government Insurance business has been managed, it seems to have been a success to a large extent; and, in order to secure its greater success and to make it satisfactory not only to insurers but to the colony generally, it is only necessary to dissociate it entirely from the Government. If the guarantee of the colony were removed for the future, I am sure the department would be put on a more reasonable business footing, and, being able to take care of itself, would prosper. The difficulties in the management of the business at the present time have been the difficulties which any department must find in disabusing the public mind of the idea that the colony should be prepared to take risks that private companies refuse. I know that -from whatever reason - there is an opinion abroad that the Government Insurance Department ought not to refuse lives; and I know that, when from time to time I have advised individuals to insure their lives, they have said to me distinctly, "I am rather doubtful about my life, and I dare not apply to any other company than the Government Insurance." There is no sufficient basis for any suspicion of that kind, as I absolutely know, because I know that in the medical department the business is as strict as possible. But there is no question whatever that there has been a feeling throughout the colony that in this matter, as in many This supposiothers, kissing goes by favour. tion has been strengthened by the use that has been made of this floating notion by canvassers for the Government Insurance Department. I have absolutely known of canvassers who have themselves filled in friends' reports, and got them signed by independent parties who have never read them, saying, "This is only a mat-ter of departmental detail; I will fill in the report, and send it in to the department."

There has been no intentional departure from the observance of insurance principles at headquarters, but the departure has been very marked on the part of servants who are paid by results. All this has sprung from the fact that, even if a loss does occur, it is a loss to the Government and a benefit to the individual. If this department could be fairly put on its own basis, it would prosper much better than it has hitherto done. In order to effect that, it is necessary to entirely dissociate this department from the Government; and the only additional precaution that the State need take is to insist that all the earnings from the Insurance Department shall be invested in Government debentures. The competition for ordinary loans in this colony is so very keen that it requires the very greatest possible discrimination to enable loan companies to pick out good securities. Such being the case, there does arise the danger that the loans made by the Government may be influenced in a way that would not be beneficial to the State. All directors are more or less in danger of being tempted, in a small country like this, to depart from the strict principles of business. I must admit that, as far as I have observed, temptations of that kind have been vigorously resisted; but there is no doubt whatever that there is a feeling in small communities that a man ought to help his friends. Sir, I am not quite sure that it is not competent for the department to commence business in foreign parts, notwithstanding there is nothing whatever stated about it in this Bill. I am rather inclined to think that the power is latent and capable of being exercised, and I form this judgment from the character of the clauses introduced into the Bill in the House of Representatives. In the Bill as there first introduced the machinery for carrying out the defined object was provided; but in this Bill it seems to me that, while the machinery remains to be provided, it is still possible to attain that object. In clause 35 of the Bill as introduced we find this :-

"If the Board shall be of opinion that it would be advisable at any time to extend the business of the Association by the establishment of branches in any part of the United Kingdom or of any of the Australasian Colonies, including Tasmania, and shall adopt a resolution to that effect at a special meeting of the Board, convened, at not less than thirty days' notice, for the special purpose of considering such resolution, the Chairman shall transmit the resolution so adopted to the Governor, for his concurrence."

There is here specific provision for the machinery; but in the present Bill it seems to me that the department can enter into the new business without the Governor's concurrence. If that be so, it would be a disastrous thing for this colony to place in the hands of Local Boards in foreign countries a power which might be used adversely to the interests of this colony. The department has done a great deal of good to the colony, and up to the present time I am, on the whole, satisfied with the results; but

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there is nothing in the condition of the Government Insurance Department that can call for any further guarantee on the part of the Government, and nothing in our circumstances to justify it. I think, if we are to trust anything to the Actuaries, we must leave to them the decision as to the amount of money for which they shall insure new lives. I know that when the department was first established it was established in considerable ignorance as to its chances of success, and the first danger that impressed the actuarial mind was that the risks would not be sufficiently widespread, and on that account an unusual activity in canvassing sprang up. Now the business has grown immensely, and there can be no excuse whatever, based either on commonsense, prudence, or general management, for the disgraceful proceedings of numbers of canvassing agents of the Government Insurance Department; they are discreditable to the department and to the colony, and injurious to the business of the department. I am anxious, as far as I can, to assist in placing this department on a really satisfactory footing. As a director of another association—the Australian Mutual Provident Society - I entertain no jealousy whatever of the Government In-surance Department. In all large businesses there ought to be a reasonable consideration for the courtesies of life; but, hitherto, I am bound to say that the Government Insurance Department has been incapable of appreciating those which have been extended to it by others. Let us hope that in the future there will be a

Government Insurance

new departure in this respect. The Hon. Mr. BONAR.—Sir, I shall support the second reading of this Bill, believing it to be a step in the right direction. I do not know whether I followed the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse and the Hon. Dr. Grace aright, but I understood them to say that they advocated the department being further separated from the Government. I understood them to express their opinion that it should be entirely free from the Government guarantee, and that all future insurances should not be stamped with the guarantee of the colony, but with the guarantee of the Association, believing that to be a sufficiently sound footing. If such is their idea, I do not feel justified in following them to that extent. I think we ought to give policy-holders the most substantial guarantee that can be got, and I should be sorry to see that guarantee refused. I sympathize with the remarks that have been made with regard to pushing the business. I think, having got the business on a satisfactory foundation, they should not go to the extremes that they have gone lately, but should rather leave people to seek the protection of the national guarantee that they can get by applying to the Government. It has been suggested by the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse that, in lieu of the Colonial Treasurer being the Chairman of the Central Board, the Controller-General should take that position; but I fear the same objection would apply to the Controller-General as applies to the Colonial Treasurer. I do not see how

it would be possible for the Controller-Gene ral to devote sufficient time to the detail management of this department. I fear would be thrusting additional duties on hi which would either interfere with the duties h already has to discharge, or lead to the particular discharge of his duties as Chairman of the Board. I also sympathize with the who object to the extension of the business other colonies. On no consideration whatev should we allow the Government business to extend beyond the Colony of New Zealand. should therefore be willing to support and amendment which would limit it entirely this colony and no other. The same remarks will also apply to the advisability or otherwis of the Government lending money on mortgage This is a matter at all times requiring a great deal of care and caution, and I do not see that it is to the advantage of the colony that money derived from this department should be lead out on mortgage. We might find ourselve burdened with many questionable securities as various companies have been; and I think, if thorough business men are tripped up in the way, the Board would be equally liable to be tripped up also. The Hon. Mr. Wilson objected to policy-holders being allowed to appoint three members of the Board. If I had my way, I should be rather disposed to increase that number. Probably the number proposed to be nominated and appointed by the Government may be right: still I think it is a large proportion. It is proposed that the Board shall consist of ten members, including the Colonial Treasurer, the Solicitor-General, the Auditor-General, the Secretary to the Treasurer, and the Public Trustee, in addition to the three persons to be nominated by the Governor; while only three are to be appointed by the policy-holders. Now, I am rather inclined to think it might be to the advantage of all if the policyholders, who are perhaps more interested in the successful management of the Association than any other body in reference to the making of profits, had a larger representation on the Board. Then, there is another feature of the Bill to which I might allude. Another clause provides that "the Colonial Treasurer" shall in reality mean any member of the Executive that he may name and depute; so that we may have the Colonial Treasurer sitting on the Board on one day, the Colonial Secretary the next day, the Defence Minister on another occasion, and so on. However, Sir, generally, I think the Bill is a step in the right direction, and the sooner we get this department placed under an independent head, and apart from political influence, the better it will be for the colony, and for those who avail themselves of the guarantee of the Government in connection with life insurance.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY .- I have just one or two words to say with regard to what I think is a misconception relative to the power given by this Bill to carry on business outside the colony. The power intended originally by the Government was taken out of the Bill in another place, and I am rather surprised at my

Hon. Dr. Grace

honourable friend Dr. Grace supposing for a single moment that this Insurance Association could carry on business outside New Zealand without a special Act, or a special guarantee being given, which could not be done without its being known to the policy-holders and the General Assembly. When a foreign company wishes to trade in a country—and the Associa-tion must be considered a foreign company in places beyond this colony—special things have to be done before it can commence business. It has to deposit a certain amount of money as security in the hands of the Government, and so forth. Now, with regard to the investing of money on mortgages, I think myself that it is desirable very often to invest money on mortgages where you get good security, and honourable gentlemen will find, on looking at the Bill, that the value of the security is to be taken into consideration. With regard to the observations of the Hon. Mr. Wilson in reference to the disqualification of members of the Assembly from acting as Directors, I think that is a great hardship which will be felt by a great many people. It is a monstrous thing to suppose that, because of the possibility of two or three members being appointed every two or three years, they should be disqualified from holding a position worth £100 per annum for three years. With regard to placing the Colonial Treasurer in the position of Chairman, that matter has already been explained by the Hon. Mr. Bonar. It is not the Colonial Treasurer who is appointed: it may also be a Minister of the Crown. If the Government have to guarantee the policies, it is only right that some responsible Minister should preside at meetings which will be held for the purpose of conducting the business of the Association. With regard to the aspersion cast by the Hon. Mr. McLean, I think if he will look at the other companies he will find that there is little difference between them respecting what is known as "touting." I was of the same impression as the honourable gentleman, but I have been assured beyond reasonable doubt that the department itself did not countenance any of the acts, some of which have become notorious, in connection with this matter. So long as the business is carried with the same degree of competition that prevails, I do not see how you can avoid that.

Bill read a second time.

EAST AND WEST COAST (MIDDLE ISLAND) AND NELSON RAILWAY AND RAILWAYS CONSTRUCTION BILL.

On the motion for the recommittal of this

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN said,—May I ask the honourable gentleman in charge of this Bill whether he will lay before us a statement showing the amount of land available alongside each of the proposed lines of railway? He could easily get that information for us by tomorrow; it is not so easy for a private member to obtain it. He could get a statement of the quantity of land on the Arthur's Pass route, and also on the Lewis's Pass route,

fifteen miles on each side of the line. I do not ask for this information in any hostile spirit. The Council has already decided by a large majority that the Bill should be read a second time, and I am not going to offer any factious opposition. It is simply as a business matter that I should like to obtain the information

Motion agreed to.

Bill considered in Committee, and reported. On the motion, That the Bill be read a third

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN said,—I think the third reading should be postponed for a day, to enable the Hon. the Colonial Secretary to sup-

ply the information I have asked for.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY .- I should be very glad to give the information, but it is physically impossible. To get it, we should have to survey the whole of the country along the different routes. The honourable member is one of those who assisted to carry an amendment as to the route by which getting the very information he desires is rendered extremely difficult. It may be said that the whole of the land in the North Canterbury and Westland Districts would be affected by the proposed railway. I should be glad to give the information which the honourable gentleman desires,

but it is physically impossible.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—I do not ask for information which it is impossible to give; and I believe that the information as to the land on all the lines could be got from the Survey Office in about an hour. There is no difficulty about it. And I say that the passing of this measure is the most unbusinesslike proceeding that has ever taken place in this Council, and I, for one, protest against the Bill going through without our having the information which I have referred to. There is no information as to the land affected—it may be in any part of Canterbury, for what we know; and I do object to our giving away large areas of land in one block, unless it is along where the line runs. I therefore think it is the most unbusinesslike Bill which ever passed the Council, both as to drafting and as to everything connected with it; and, as a business man, I am ashamed to give my assent to it. I hope a division will be taken on the third reading, and I shall vote against it. And, as the honourable gentleman will not voluntarily supply the information I have asked for, I shall give notice

of motion for its production.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I will promise to supply the honourable gentleman with whatever information can be given as soon as he specifies what he wants.

Bill read a third time.

GREYMOUTH HARBOUR BOARD BILL. The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Sir, I think it would be almost impossible to dissever the discussion likely to take place upon this measure from that on another Bill which stands next on the Order Paper, and therefore, in speaking to one, it may perhaps be permitted to refer generally to the other. The object of the present Bill is to facilitate the working

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of the coal mines in the Greymouth District. I know very well that objection has been taken outside this Council, and probably it has been taken by some members inside this Council, to the fact that we are giving away, for the benefit of a few companies, a very large revenue and a very large tract of country; but, if honourable members will look at a plan which we have here, showing the very small area affected by this Bill, and the very small quantity of land which has been given to the companies now working the coal mines in that district, they will find that the area now held by the companies at work is almost not worth speaking about, compared with the quantity of land considered to be available there for coal-mining purposes. Honourable members will bear in mind that along the coast for miles there is nothing in the nature of a harbour which could for any purposes be relied on; nor, as the case now stands, is there any possibility of securing success or profit to those engaged in mining the deposits of coal, which exists in very large quantities in that district, unless at very great expense to themselves. There is no doubt whatever that the coal in the districts of Greymouth and Westport is so immense in quantity that it will be impossible to exhaust it for hundreds, and even thousands, of years. An honourable gentleman opposite laughs; but I am sure it will take thousands of years to exhaust in ordinary course the vast quantities of coal to be found in those districts. They are estimated at hundreds of millions of tons, and, if the ordinary rate of consumption is considered, I think I am not wrong in saying it will be thousands of years before those immense deposits will be exhausted. Now, what is proposed by these Bills is to establish a Board which will have under its control the working of the Harbour of Greymouth, and also a Board for enlarging the Harbour of Westport and making it available for the export of coal. It is proposed by the Bills to grant revenues of a certain character to these Boards—which will be nominated Boards—for the purpose of raising funds to complete the works, upon which already very large sums have been expended. Honourable members will see, from a return lately laid on the table, that very large sums of money have already been expended on harbour works in those two places, which have, unfortunately, not been very successful in achieving the results desired. By the Greymouth Bill it is proposed to enable the Board to borrow to the extent of £100,000 "for the construction of or completion of harbour works" in that place; and clause 9 of the Bill pro-

"If the Governor in Council is satisfied at any time that the revenues accruing to the Board under this Act are sufficient to meet the interest on any loan proposed to be raised under the authority of this Act, and to provide a sinking fund for repayment thereof, he may declare such loan and interest to be guaranteed."

The guarantee is limited to £100,000 under this Bill, and to £150,000 under the other.

Hon. Mr. P. A. Buckley

There is a saving provision in each of these Bills, which is that the colony may take over the works at any time, when the property vested in the Board will become the property of the colony. It would be wrong of me to suppose, in view of another Bill which has just passed from this Council, that these Bills affecting the harbours at Westport and Greymouth have not been sufficiently considered by the Council; and I have no doubt whatever that the nature of the proposals of these Bills is well understood by every honourable member. I am certain that the discussion which will take place on these Bills will be marked by the same spirit which has characterized the discussions on previous measures, and we shall probably have the subject discussed very fully. any general observations which I may be obliged to make in asking the Council to assent to the second reading of the Bill which I now

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.—I think the Council feels, or at least I feel, that at present we experience one of the inconveniences which result from local Bills of this kind brought in by the Government being exempted from the rules necessitating the reference of such local Bills to the Local Bills Committee. I venture to say, if that course had been followed in reference to this Bill, the Council would have been put in possession of more information than has been possible for the Hon. the Colonial Secretary to obtain for himself or for the Council. If we had been put in possession of a knowledge of the financial aspect of this project we could come to a better understanding as to its quality and effect. There are already, under "The Westland and Nelson Coal Fields Administration Act, 1877," considerable endowments set apart for a particular purpose in the Greymouth district. Upon the security of those endowments a sum of money, amounting at present, I think, to more than £140,000, has been expended. Therefore the proceeds accruing from the endowments affected by this Bill are already appropriated to the payment of interest and sinking fund on that amount. I should desire to learn from the honourable gentleman when he replies is, seeing that very large additional charges are to be incurred in making improvements in these harbours of Westport and Greymouth, from what source is the revenue to be derived to meet the interest of the debt, and the current expenses of the establishments required to carry on the works? When this £150,000, authorized by this Bill, has been raised, the debt of the Greymouth Harbour will be £300,000, or thereabouts; and therefore it is desirable that we should know from what source interest and sinking fund on that large sum will be, or be likely to be, provided. I see my honourable friend the Colonial Secretary has given notice of an amendment proposing to make a charge of 3d. per ton on coal shipped in the harbour, as a kind of addition to the revenue. Whether that will be sufficient or not I do not know; but I think it is very desirable the Council should know, before

it proceeds to pass the Bill, what will be the probable resources of the Greymouth Harbour Board, and what are the chances of necessary interest and sinking fund being recovered out of the revenue of the Board.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—I am not going to object to the passing of these Bills, because I think they are necessary, and that it is a matter of necessity for us to try and get coal out of these harbours by whatever means are available. The only objection I have is to the manner in which this is proposed to be done; for I would myself rather have seen the Government put these amounts on the estimates, and let the works be carried out by the colony. There would then be proper supervision, and as the works proceeded we should see the effect, and they might be stopped or otherwise as circumstances might show was desirable. Then, as to raising the money, it will be virtually the colony raising it, but still it will be raised by a process under which, I venture to say, it will cost us considerably more for interest, notwithstanding the Government guarantee and the good security, than if it were borrowed direct by the Government. The Board will have to pay a higher rate of interest than the Colonial Government would have to pay; and I think, under those circumstances, it would be better if the Government provided the money and carried out the works. However, I am not going to quarrel with the Bill on that account; and there is a provision, under which it will no doubt soon be necessary to act, that the Government can step in and take over the harbours, and I hope that before long they will do so. There is another matter I object to, and that is to the railways being made a security under these That is the thin end of the wedge towards leasing the railways. I do not like that provision, and I would rather see security of some other nature given instead of the railways. As to the notice on the Order Paper, I think it is perfectly right that a rate should be charged on coal after a certain time, and I do not think the companies should object to pay that. If all these sources of revenue were totalled up, I think it would be found that we are making endowments to spare. However, I have no objection to the second reading of the Bill, and the points I have referred to are mostly points which can be considered in Committee.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—The Hon. the Colonial Secretary has said it would be almost hopeless to attempt to confine the discussion on this subject to the one Bill the second reading of which has been moved; and under these circumstances it will be permissible for me to take a somewhat wider ground in speaking on this Bill than otherwise would be the case. I think the two Bills must be considered together, and the few remarks I have to offer on this occasion will refer to the action I shall take in regard to each of these measures. I agree with the Hon. Mr. McLean that it is very desirable we should do all in our power to develop the working of the coal-measures on the West Coast, thereby rendering ourselves independent of foreign supplies for

the portion of our consumption of coal which is at present derived from outside sources. It is a matter of the utmost colonial importance that we should do this, and I have no doubt whatever that any action we take in that direction will receive the concurrence of the colony at large. But I think we ought to weigh well what we are about, and that we ought to be cautious as regards the manner of our proceeding. What is the evidence we have as to the extent of the coal in this district? The evidence is that at Greymouth there is enough coal, not, as the Hon. the Colonial Secretary says, to supply the wants of the colony for thousands of years, but still undoubtedly enough to supply the wants of the colony for many years. There is evidence, likewise, to the effect that at Westport there is coal sufficient to supply the wants of the colony for many years to come. Now, I think we should have all the advantage we can expect to realize from placing ourselves in a position of independence as regards our consumption of coal in the colony if we confine our attention to one of these measures. If we can get all the coal required for the colony from one of these harbours, why should we incur a very large expenditure in developing two of these harbours at the same time? Why, if we can get coal sufficient for all our requirements from one harbour, should we go to a large expense to develop the other harbour, thereby enabling one coal company to compete with another, to cut each other's throats and to render both undertakings probably unsuccessful? This is one of the instances of the reckless mode in which we involve ourselves in unduly large liabilities in matters in which we should proceed cautiously and deliberately. We are too anxious to do all things at the same time. We have just passed a Bill to make a railway to bring coal from the West Coast to Canterbury to supply the requirements there: at the same time we are told, in the Public Works Statement, that it is desirable to open a line of railway in Canterbury to enable some coal of inferior quality there to be brought into competition with the coal to bring which the East and West Coast Railway is mainly intended to be constructed. So here, instead of confining our attention to one thing which could supply all our requirements, we plunge into a variety of undertakings, and pledge the colony to an extent altogether beyond what is necessary. Now, it is through bearing in mind these principles that my vote will be influenced. The evidence is that we can get at Greymouth all the coal that we require for the colony, and I shall vote for the Greymouth Bill; and, if we can get all the coal we require for the colony at Grey-. mouth, why should we go on with large works: at Westport? No reasonable man would proceed in such a way in business matters. An honourable friend behind me mentions "the export trade." That is not worth consideration. It is perfectly clear that we cannot compete in the coal-export trade with Australia, because vessels going to China and other places can call and load with coal at Newcastle without. 130

going out of their way, while, if they came to New Zealand to load coal, it would be several days' voyage out of their way. If there is to be any export trade, Greymouth will meet all the requirements of that trade for many years to come. The evidence is that the immense quantities of coal at Greymouth will be sufficient for the colony, and for an export trade, if there is any, for many years. I ask again, why, under those circumstances, should we incur an expenditure of £500,000 in connection with the Westport Harbour? Sir, I shall vote for the Greymouth Harbour Bill for the reasons I have stated, and, if that Bill passes its second reading, I shall vote against the Westport Harbour Bill; but, if the Greymouth Bill does not meet with the sanction of the Council, then, regarding it as a matter of imperative necessity that we should do all in our power to develop the coal fields of the colony, I shall vote for the Westport Harbour Bill. But I do not consider both Bills requisite, and shall vote in favour of one only.

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—In the discussion of this question I am proud to know that one man has towered above all his colleagues in the Cabinet, above all those who are actuated by party feeling, and above all those who are actuated by the peddling feeling that in voting for the Bill they would be conferring some great advantage on the shareholders in the mines. Major Atkinson said last session that whoever sits on these benches must look upon the Bill for the Harbour of Westport as a colonial measure. Ten years ago I was very desirous that we should have a central gaol at Westport, and that we should use the convicts to develop the coal-mines there, as they do in the States of North America. I say now that I should like to see the Government take these two ports into their own hands, and not only the ports, but the coal. They should re-sume the whole of these mines, giving proper compensation for them, and working them with That has been done in their own convicts. other parts of the world; and why should it not be done here? If they do that, there will be a large town - one of the largest towns in the colony - at Westport; and before three years there would be a compulsory railway from Westport to Nelson, tapping the whole of the Wanganui District to supply Westport with provisions. That, Sir, would be a great blessing; and I say again I should be very glad to see the Government make these harbours. They could do the work more cheaply and more efficiently than under the method proposed by this Bill. And I should like to see them take into their hands the coal also. But, if that is not possible, I intend to vote for the second reading of the Bill. I have been told, "You have an interest; you should not vote." Sir, if I were mixed up with a scheme to obtain Maori lands, and a Bill dealing with them were brought in, I would not vote for it; but I shall not be ashamed to vote here. I have put my money into it, it is helping to develop a great industry, and I am not at all ashamed of it.

The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE.—Sir, the

honourable gentleman who has just sat down has started a new code of morality. is interested he thinks it quite proper to vote; but, where he is not interested, if he were interested he would not vote. We shall see, directly, when the voting takes place, whether Greymouth or Westport gets the larger support, and we shall be able to judge then how far the interests of the colony and how far other interests are concerned; because it has been absolutely shown by the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse that for £100,000 we can get all the coal that is likely to be wanted for a hundred years, and that there can be no reasonable ground for voting £500,000 to get a duplicate supply from nearly the same part of the country. I am very sorry to see one part of the colony, as is invariably the case, so much more considered than another, and if anything was required to be added to our injury I think we who live in this Island have received it within the last few days. Sir, if such a proposal as this had been made for the North Island, to develop the North Island coal fields, it would have been scouted, hurried, and driven out of Parliament; but, because it is for the happy South Island, there is to be no limit; we are to give £12,000 a year—£12,000 in royalty; to become liable for an immense debt raised anyhow; and to provide two harbours for their benefit, and not for the benefit of the colony. It is said there is the foreign trade, and it is for the foreign trade and not for the good of New Zealand that the owners of the mines desire these works, — to make the coal cheap for export, not cheap in this country. As the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse has told us, we are to be put to a huge expense, and it will then turn out that it could not be undertaken profitably. It should be made clear, before the colony undertakes an expenditure to enable these industries to flourish, that the colony will get something out of them. I fail to see what the colony is to get. We know that the circumstances of the companies are most happy. any honourable gentleman will read the standing advertisement in the Australian papers they will find that these companies do not want anything. There never was such a statement as that. Honourable gentlemen can read it for themselves in the library; I will not inflict it upon them now. According to that, there is certainly no occasion to come to the rescue of these parties. But, if we are to do so, let us be reasonable—let us take the cheaper course. If an expenditure of £100,000 will supply New Zealand with coal for a hundred years, why spend £600,000? And it must be remembered that this is the fag-end of a long story. have given them half a million of money already. What is to be the return? We were told, when it suited them to be-little the population, that the whole population, including Hokitika, was only twenty thousand people. It may be more than that; but here we find £220,000 has been spent at Westport, and £314,000 at Greymouth. Coming back to the first principle, we have been accused in the North Island of having, by our numbers in this 1884.7

place, rejected a certain Bill because we were determined to allow no advantages to the South Island. Now, what are the facts? The population of the North Island, compared with the South, is as two to three, and yet, according to the latest published returns appended to the Public Works Statement, there has been expended £5,556,000 in the North Island, and £10,282,000 in the South Island. That is what is past; and this session we are passing several millions more of public money for expenditure in the South Island; and we have nothing but that perpetual promise, together with a little sympathy, that we get from session to session respecting the North Island Trunk Railway. Then, as to the coal industries, how are we treated? There was a coal mine at Kawakawa, and the railway was put there; but they said that that railway was not to be made until the company had been compelled to pay rent. True it is that the company's coal has fallen out, and the company has broken down of late; but there is the fact that the rent was collected, and that the line was not to be made till that was done. Why should the Greymouth people be exempted from that, except that what is sauce for the goose is not sauce for the gander? I should be the last person to raise such a question as this as between the two Islands: it is a thing I have never done before; but I say I have a right to do it when the Premier of this colony publishes over and over again—and it appears in all the papers—that the members of this Council resist grants of money to the South mcrely because we want it for the North. When that is the case, I have the right to make a comparison in matters of this kind. Not only are we asked to give money and a great deal of colonial wealth to help speculation in the South Island, but we are actually called upon to do the thing in duplicate, and to do it at a cost six times greater than is really required. If we must pass this Greymouth Bill let us make a big mouth and let them have it as it stands, but do not let us stultify ourselves by passing the Westport Bill as well. If we will not do that, if the interests of Westport are so much greater than those of Greymouth, then let us transpose the thing-pass the Westport Bill and reject the Greymouth Bill. To pass both is obviously unnecessary: that has been clearly proved. In my opposition I am actuated by no feeling against the Middle Island; I am acting upon the simple ground that it is unjust to the people of this country to take this large executive. country to take this huge amount of money and throw it away in a speculation which at present has to do with purely private interests. Would the colony grant a million of money to forward the sheep-farming interests in Canterbury, Otago, or Hawke's Bay? Would they help the agricultural interest by the gift of a million of money? If not, why should this coal industry get it? An honourable gentleman said just now that he would like to see the Government take it up. It must be obvious that there is a disposition to get every

and we shall have nothing but Bills of this description till we take it. It would be the cheapest course to take by a great deal to buy up the shares of the Westport Colliery Company and have done with it, as we did those of the distillery companies some years ago. I begin now almost to regret that we allowed, at any time, bargains to be taken over by the colony at all. I remember when we first began with the deferred-payment selectors: we have dealt three times with them, and now I understand there is another relief Bill to come in in a few days. It is always the case: Parliament is always asked to undo these bargains afterwards, and, wherever the Government is the least bit interested, that is made the excuse for taking the concern over. They have not asked us to take the Westport Company over, but the Hon. Captain Fraser has made the suggestion. argument for the East and West Coast Railway was that it would establish a coal industry: now here it is said we have an industry established, and must conserve it at any cost. Sir, I shall follow the example of the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse and support this Bill. I shall vote against the Westport Bill. If there is any motion to transpose them, and this Bill is thrown out, and the Westport Bill comes up, I shall vote in favour of it, though it is rather more

expensive.
The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN. — Sir, I should not rise to address the Council but for some remarks made by the last speaker, Sir George Whitmore, who asked us whether there was any benefit to be derived by the colony from these ports. Has the honourable gentleman the colony would benefit by them? I will simply tell him how the colony will benefit. We all know that coals have a certain marketthese coal fields, the principal matter being the carriage of coals, we must expect that, without any doubt, the price of coals will be considerably reduced, to the benefit of the people of the colony and of the Government itself, which is a great consumer of coal on the State railways. I can assure the honour-able gentleman that, if the Harbours of Westport and Greymouth are made accessible to wessels of larger tonnage, the price of coals must of necessity come down considerably, probably as much as 3s., 4s., or 5s. per ton. That would be, on 500,000 tons of coal, the very large amount of £80,000 or £100,000 per annum, by which the colony would profit. The honour-able gentleman knows very well that there is nothing like competition. They say it is the life of trade; and there can be no harm in two harbours carrying on the same trade. it must not be forgotten that the the coals in the Westport and Greymouth coal fields are of a somewhat different character, and both are celebrated for particular qualities. There is scarcely a better steam-coal in existence than the Westport coal, and there is not a better gas-coal all over the world than the Greymouth coal; and therefore the interests of those two bad bargain into the hands of the Government, | ports, although otherwise identical, would not

touch each other in their competition for trade in New Zealand. I can assure honourable members that the expenditure on the Greymouth Harbour works, the Bill for which is now before the Council, will in no case exceed the amount which appears to be asked for by the Bill. That sum will finish the harbour works in accordance with the plans of Sir John Coode. Those plans have been followed hitherto, and have been found most successful in every respect. Where vessels drawing about 8ft. had great difficulty in entering that harbour, now we have vessels coming there drawing 12ft. or 18ft. and more, and going away with full cargoes of coal, showing the success of the undertaking; and I have no doubt, when the works are carried out according to the plans of Sir John Coode, the result will be very satisfactory. Nor should it be forgotten, as the Bill asks for £100,000, that the Greymouth Harbour, as such, has still a claim arising from money voted when the Three-Million Loan was agreed to. There was then £100,000 set aside for the harbours on the West Coast. was for Greymouth and Hokitika, and out of that loan for the Greymouth Harbour works only the sum of £26,000 has been obtained. Greymouth is still entitled to a share out of the loan which is to be negotiated at the beginning of next year. Therefore our claim is about £60,000 or £70,000. When this very important work is finished I have no doubt the Government will be only too anxious to take everything back-to take charge of the railway and the harbour, and to take charge of the collecting of the revenue to be derived from this; and it will be found that the revenues to be derived from the export of coal, and the harbour dues at Greymouth, and the railways for carrying those coals, will more than cover all the expenditure. Therefore I hope that honourable members will not object to the second reading of this Bill. We find that the Government have already commenced to make new additions, and, in point of fact, to do nothing less than to raise the royalty from 6d. to 9d. per ton, which will make a very considerable difference in the revenue, and which will come out of the pockets of the owners of the

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—I do not know that I should have risen had it not been for the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse and the Hon. Sir George Whitmore. The Hon. Mr. Waterhouse seems to think that it would be advisable to proceed with the Greymouth and not with the Westport Harbour, and he gives as his reason that, if we can get plenty of coals at Greymouth, we should not expend a large sum of money at Westport. Now, as has been stated by the Hon. Mr. Lahmann, the coal at Greymouth and the coal at Westport are very disminilar. The Greymouth coal is the best gas coal in the known world. In Victoria and South Australia they are quite prepared to pay 8s. a ton more for it than for coal from New South Wales; but the great difficulty is to get that coal conveyed to Victoria or South Australia, for the very good

reason that the Harbours of Greymouth and Westport will not, in their present state, admit the loading of large vessels. Now, I deny entirely that it would be at all possible for Greymouth to supply all the coel for which there would be a demand. I look upon it that the demand is unlimited and the supply is unlimited, and that the colony would be doing wrong in not encouraging the expert of coal to the very largest extent that it is in our power to do. The Hon. Mr. Waterhouse said that we could not compete with Newcastle coal. I am prepared to say that not only can we compete with, but we can undersell Newcastle, and supply a better coal—that is, provided the harbours are made to admit large bottoms. I have taken a great interest in the formation of these harbours ever since 1870. I have been twitted with being a shareholder in the Westport Coal Company; shareholder. To show that I aim consistent, I proposed in 1870, when the public works scheme was before the other branch of the Legislature, that £500,000 should be expended in opening up these coal fields on the west coast of the Middle Island; so that I have been perfectly consistent: and, if the Government had expended a million sterling there, instead of squandering it all over the colony on gold fields and in roads and bridges, I say it would be returning to the colony at the present time at least £500,000 per annum. In order to work these fields a number of people must have been employed and settled in the district, so that at least half a million sterling per annum would have been obtained in the shape of Customs and other taxes. And it would have provided a means of export by which we could have increased the productions of the colony. My honourable friend Sir George Whitmore says he shall see whether Westport or Greymouth gets the greatest support. Well, I intend to support both. I believe in both the harbours, and I intend to support both Bills. I hope this Council will not be led away by such remarks as those of the Hon. Sir George Whitmore and the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse, but will pass both Bills. The Hon. Sir George Whitmore said that such a proposal as this, if made on behalf of the North Island, would have been scouted. 'Well, all I can say is that there have been far greater proposals for the North Island that have not been scouted-proposals which have not turned out at all so satisfactory as these har-bours will turn out. Then, the honourable gentleman says that about half a million has been expended in those districts. Well, I believe there has been fully that expended; but then, if we take what revenue has been brought

into the colony from the districts—
The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE.—Nothing at all.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—"Nothing at all!" I have a return in my hand which shows that during last year the colony received from Westport £17,768, and from Greymouth £11,415.

Hon. Mr. Lahmann

The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE. - What | from?

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS. - From coalfields. I have the return here, which he can

The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE.—It is our

property.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—But the colony cannot expect to derive these revenues without doing something; and I have another return in my hand, showing that the West Coast has contributed £1,285,533 to the Customs revenue alone. That is more than Hawke's Bay has done since its existence. With regard to the mining districts, I may as well refer to the exports, which I find, from the settlements established on the West Coast, have amounted to £10,566,856. Well, I may state, with reference to the Harbour of Westport—which, as I have said, is the one that I am better acquainted with—that the estimated output for the current year is no less than 100,000 tons by one company alone, the Westport Coal Com-pany. If the harbour only permitted large vessels to enter I am thoroughly satisfied that the export from that port could be increased to 1,000,000 tons per annum. And I would call the attention of the Council to the fact that an export of 1,000,000 tons per annum would involve the employment of somewhere about 5,000 miners. Well, you might take these as having, on an average, a family of four each; which would give 20,000 souls. Then, there would be the camp-followers, such as butchers and bakers, and shopkeepers, and doctors; and I must not forget the lawyers, seeing that they are a necessary evil, I suppose. You might take the number of these camp-followers at 1,250: that is about the usual proportion for that number of population throughout the colony. Taking the same average to a family, that would give 5,000, or a total of 25,000, in Westport alone. According to the present average of what each one pays to the revenue of the colony, that would produce to the consolidated revenue of the colony somewhere about £120,000. The deposits of coal in West-

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.—Sir, I beg to call attention to the fact that it is not the Westport Harbour Bill that is now before the Council,

but the Greymouth Harbour Bill.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—I understood that, as the Bills were so similar, the discussion was to be taken on both at the same time.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.-I understood that this is the second reading of the Greymouth

Harbour Bill.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—Is not the discussion, Sir, to be allowed on both Bills to-

The Hon. the SPEAKER. - That was the

understanding.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—I stated at the outset that I was not so well acquainted with the Greymouth Harbour as with the Westport Harbour. I hold that they are both necessary harbours, and both should be made as good as possible, and without loss of any time. In

order to show that there is no lack of coal there, I may quote the estimates of Mr. Herbert Cox, lately of the Geological Department, who estimates the total yield of the field at 140,000,000 tons — that is, in Westport. Now, I will just refer to the obligations under which the colony rests both to the Grey coal fields and to the Westport coal fields.

The Hon. Mr. CHAMBERLIN.—Am I to understand that 140,000,000 tons is the estimated quantity of coal in the whole district?

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—It is the estimated quantity in the Buller district.

An Hon. MEMBER.—What can be seen?

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—That is what the Geological Department state to be the deposit of coal. A report laid before a meeting

"The deposits of coal in the Buller district are almost illimitable in extent, as may be seen in the various reports furnished to the Government by geologists employed for the purpose. Mr. S. Herbert Cox, F.R.G.S., estimates the total yield of the field at one hundred and forty million tons, and other experts employed corroborate this statement. There are two coal companies in full operation upon the field—viz., the Westport Coal Company and the Koranui Coal Company. The former company has expended upwards of £170,000, and has a most complete plant, self-acting inclines, tramways, steamers, &c. It has already produced and sent for shipment 500 tons per diem, and is capable of working up to 2,000 tons per diem. The Koranui Company has expended upwards of £50,000, and is now in complete working order, although some further improvements to its inclines are contemplated.

That was two years ago. It is now up to 100,000 tons. The company now has its own steamers; and, if the steamers would only load full cargoes at all seasons of the year, they would be able to ship from there at least 120,000 to 130,000 tons per annum.

The Hon. Mr. G. R. JOHNSON.—For what

reason cannot they come up?

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—There is not water enough on the bar. However, I do not think it is worth while to trouble the Council with any more extracts, but I can state this: that there has been a contract of 208,000 tons which could have been had for Victoria, if we had been able to send it out in bottoms carrying 1,200 to 1,500 tons. The report I before referred to says,-

"The Westport Harbour is naturally deeper than that of Newcastle, the great coal port of New South Wales; and so late as 1860 the River Tyne, in England, was in a worse condition than the Buller at present, vessels drawing 12ft. sometimes taking weeks to get to sea. By a judicious expenditure, the depth has been increased to 36ft. at high water, and 24ft. at low water. The export from the Tyne was last year 8,000,000 tons of coal. England affords many precedents of this kind, and it is selfevident that, if the harbour improvements at Home had not kept pace with the extension of trade, England would not now command the Greymouth Harbour

estate." That is the opinion of Sir John Coode. I need not occupy the time of the Council longer. hope the Council will support both these Bills; and, if the work is a success - which I have every reason to believe it will be-then these harbours will be cleared of debt, and any money borrowed upon them will be paid off within five years after completion by the royalties and revenues. I notice that my honourable friend Dr. Pollen smiles, as though he were rather doubtful about that. I am not a very sanguine man myself, but I feel perfectly certain that, if these harbours can only be made so as to admit large bottoms, they will never cost the colony

a single penny. With regard to the royalties with which it is proposed to endow these harbours, I do not see that it is any more than they have a right to expect. It was a promise made at the time when the leases were granted; and, seeing that we are dispensing with our gold-fields royalties and handing them over to the counties, I do not see why we should not, in the same way, hand over the royalties of these

coal fields for the formation of these harbours. I do trust that the Council will pass both these Bills. I do not think they will have any reason

to regret doing so.

The Hon. Mr. BONAR.—Sir, the Bill that we have under discussion at the present moment is the Greymouth Harbour Board Bill, and, although many of the arguments that apply to the Greymouth Harbour Board Bill would also apply to the Westport Harbour Board Bill, I think it is almost a pity that we have drifted so far from the question really under discussion as to discuss the merits of the Westport Harbour Board Bill. I think it would be better to confine ourselves to the Greymouth Bill. I take it, from the tone of the discussion and the remarks of members generally, that all are agreed as to the desirability, in the interests of the colony, of giving every facility for the development of our coal-measures. Every honourable member who has spoken is most thoroughly impressed with the importance of affording every facility for bringing our coal into the market and developing the coal-ex-port trade. The only exception that was taken to doing that as a general policy was, I think, that taken by the Hon. Sir George Whitmore. He seemed to be of opinion that this money was to be spent for the benefit of some private companies. I think the general feeling of the Council was not in favour of that view at all. That is reducing it to a very narrow limit, because, although there may be only a few companies at present, there is an immense area containing coal, which only wants proper facilities for getting a sufficient output of that coal to enable other companies to start; so that the colony will reap the benefit, and this is not for the benefit of particular shareholders, but it is a national question, and one that

affects the whole of New Zealand. In reference to the Greymouth District, we have already had considerable experience as to the output of coal there. As much as 4,000 tons of coal per week has been exported from that district. The harbour works have been very successful indeed; and I think that is a very important feature, and one that we should bear steadily in mind in considering this question. At one time we had the most eminent engineer to report on these works, but, until we carried them out to a certain extent, there was always an amount of uncertainty as to how far they would succeed. I can remember when vessels had to wait till they could come on the top of spring tides in entering this harbour, and even then they did not always get in, while sometimes they were landed on the beach. Since the stone wall has been erected we have had nearly 10ft. or 12ft. at low water, which means 20ft. at high water. Then, we have a protection against the very heavy seas, and I have recently seen large steamers and vessels cross the Greymouth bar with a sea running such as they would not have dared to approach before this wall was thrown out. This proves conclusively to my own mind that the proposed scheme of Sir John Coode has been a permanent success so far as it has gone, and I feel perfectly satisfied that the further carrying-out of these works on the same plan will lead to still further improvement of the bar, so that vessels of larger capacity may cross it with perfect safety hereafter. It is now a matter of fact that steamers of the Union Company are able to cross the bar and take 500 or 600 tons of coal away from Greymouth Harbour. Such a thing a few years ago would have been laughed at, and any one suggesting it would have been called a maniac; but it is a matter of ordinary occurrence now. This, I think, is a very important feature in connection with the proposed expenditure of money, because it shows that the plans we are working on-those of Sir John Coode—are a success, and can be relied upon in order to improve the harbour. Very well, the next question that occurs to me is the amount of money to be spent on them. That is a matter regarding which we can only rely on our engineers. Then comes the question about the two ports; and I do not want at the present moment to mix up more with the Westport Harbour than I can possibly help, but this has been made a feature of by some speakers. But, even with the improvements that we have at present effected, I believe that no one port singly will supply the requirements of the colony, and I do not think that it is to the interest of the colony that a monopoly should be placed in the possession of any one port. The main object we have to achieve is to bring the price down to the very lowest point, and the production of coal at the cheapest possible rate will have great effect in furthering the interests of the colony, in promoting the steam communication of the colony both with the Home-country and with the other colonies, in giving further facilities for meat-freezing, and so on. One industry will supplement others

Hon. Mr. Reynolds

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in the colony, and if we confine our attention to one port, and that port is inadequate to supply the wants of the colony, we shall make a grand mistake. We shall be throwing the whole monopoly into the hands of one port, and thereby do ourselves a serious injury, although we might possibly be conferring a great benefit on the proprietors of those mines. I therefore think, looking at the matter from a colonial point of view, that every facility should be given for the cheap production of coal and a healthy competition. Apart from that, I do not think we should lose sight of the large sums of money which have already been expended in promoting this industry in both these ports. At Greymouth £180,000 has been expended, and at Westport £220,000.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—Exclusive of rail-

ways?
The Hon. Mr. BONAR.—I mean including railways. I take the amounts from the Public Works Report. The amounts are put down as having been expended on railways, and also include the amount spent on wharves as being part of the necessary completion to these rail-We have already gone to this expenditure; and are we to allow it to remain idle simply for the want of further expenditure? I say No. Having gone so far as to encourage the outlay of capital on these mines, with the prospect of other companies being started, I think it is our duty to make proper provision for the output of coal. To a large extent it is the quantity which is put out which enables the price to be reduced: the outside expenses hang so much upon that consideration. If you have only a small output you must add considerably to the price of the coal in order to cover the expense. I think, therefore, it would be a great mistake to stop short just now and hamper several of these ports by withholding this expenditure. And, Sir, after all, what does it mean? We are called upon to give a guarantee, at the outside, for £100,000 in the case of Greymouth and £150,000 in the case of Westport, which means £6,000 per annum for Greymouth and £9,000 for Westport. But we know that the returns from Greymouth approach to very nearly that amount, and when the royalties are taken into consideration the balance will be very trifling indeed, and I do not think the colony will be burdened with a single penny on that account. We are asked to give our guarantee to that, and I do not think we should hesitate in doing so. The Hon. Mr. Reynolds has quoted statistics, and he estimates that, if the port were sufficiently open to allow large vessels to come in, there would be a probable export of something like 3,000,000 tons to foreign ports, including India, San Francisco, and the different ports of the world, where a fair share of trade might be expected. This would add very materially to our national importance, and that is a matter which ought not to be lost sight of. amount we are called upon to guarantee appears to me to be a very small amount, considering the probability of bringing about such large results, especially when we remember

that £250,000 has been laid out on public buildings which might have been very well dispensed with, and the prospect of any return from which is very slight. We have been often asked to spend £200,000 for a railway-station here, and a central gool there, and so forth—buildings very useful and proper in their way, no doubt; and we ought not to hesitate to guarantee the interest in the present case, which can be easily recouped from the royalties and wharfage charges, and so forth, and which will not prove a burden to the colony at large. I shall give my most hearty support to the Greymouth Harbour Board Bill, and when the Westport Harbour Board Bill comes up for second reading I shall support that too.

second reading I shall support that too.

The Hon. Mr. CHAMBERLIN.—Sir, I think if one of these harbours is developed it will be sufficient. If there is an unlimited quantity of coal in one of these harbours for—I was going to say an unlimited time; at any rate for—hundreds and thousands of years, it shows there is not the slightest necessity to develop the coal in both these harbours. Indeed, what would be the effect if such were done? One would be competing with the other. We are told that things are going on in a smooth way, and that success is certain. If that be so, and if there be no possibility of failure, where is the necessity for the proposed guarantee? Then, in regard to an export trade, where is the proposed to send this enormous quantity of coal? Certainly not to Europe, nor to India.

An Hon. Member.—Why?
The Hon. Mr. CHAMBERLIN.—Because it is sufficiently warm there. I make that answer because I think it is a suitable one for the question that was asked. The honourable member must be very ignorant of the state of affairs in India if he does not know that there is an unlimited quantity of coal in India. Nor is it necessary to send coal to China, or to Australia, to any extent. There is coal in various parts of Australia in enormous quantities, and to send it there would be, to repeat an old proverb, "sending coal to Newcastle." Therefore I should like to know where this wonderful export the Hon. Mr. Reynolds spoke of is to go. He speaks of an export of a million tons a year, and at the same time he says there are only 140,000,000 tons to export. So that the whole amount would be cleared out in 140 years, at the smallest rate of export. The Hon. Mr. Lahmann said, if I understood him rightly, that the Westport coal was of a different quality from that at Greymouth, the Westport coal being a good steam coal, while that at Greymouth is good for gas. Well, I say let us reserve our steam coal; and as to gas—of which there is plenty in different parts of the colony—it is always useful. Gas not only gives light—of which I think, on the present occasion, we might well have had a little more but it because might well have had a little more—but it also gives heat. Therefore I think, if we have a choice as to which of the coals we should use at the present time, we should reserve our steam and our gas coal. Then, as to the desirability or otherwise of developing the coal in both these places at once, I am certainly in.

favour of preferring Greymouth first because of | the lesser cost—£100,000 as against £500,000. That, of course, means a considerable annual saving in interest alone — something like £20,000 or £25,000 a year. The advocates of this Bill evidently show a little too much. In showing that there is so much coal there that they hardly know what to do with it, I think they have rather "let the cat out of the bag," because they show that there is not the slightest necessity to develop these two districts. Again, it seems very amusing that gentlemen who are advocating the development of these coal-mines not exactly in what I should call a private way, but requiring the "backing-up" of the colony, seem to ignore altogether the fact that coal is to be found in other parts of New Zealand as well as in those Allow me to assure them that two places. coal can be found from pretty well the extreme north of this Island to the extreme south, and of pretty good quality—at the Bay of Islands, Whangarei, Waikato, Miranda, Raglan, Aotea, Mokau, and many other places; and, as we have seen by the map in reference to the Main Trunk Railway of the North Island, coal is to be found at various places along the country surveyed for that railway. I therefore want to know why the colony should be called upon to subsidize—for it really is subsidizing—these coal mines any more than others. I cannot con-ceive anything more unjust. I shall certainly support the one Bill only, and act in the same way as my honourable friend Mr. Waterhouse: that is, if the Greymouth Bill is carried I shall

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oppose the Westport Bill, and vice versâ.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND.—I should like to explain my vote on this Bill shortly, reserving my chief argument for the Westport Bill, which follows. I have on this occasion great pleasure in supporting my honourable friends on the Government bench. To see them united and happy is an infinite pleasure in which we all share. If I needed anything to convince me I ought to vote for this Bill, it would be supplied in the very liberal expressions I have heard from the Hon. Mr. Lahmann—and I hope he will not be displeased at my publishing them now—in the lobbies, when he said that he wished to see the two Bills carried, but that, if one of them was to fail, he would rather it should be that affecting Greymouth, in which he was most interested. That is a very pleasing and interesting pendant to the remarks of my honourable friend Sir George Whitmore, who endeavoured on the present occasion to arouse a spirit of jealous localism—which, unfortunately, is far from dead, although the provinces are abolished -to set North against South and one place against another. There is one argument which has not yet been raised against the Greymouth Bill, and in this matter I would again call the attention of the Hon. Mr. Reynolds to the unity of the policy he supports. It seems to me he is quite unconscious of the perfect unity of the policy shown in the Bills of his Government. A reason which might be urged against this Bill is that we have just passed a

Bill to provide railway carriage of coal from Greymouth, which railway will be absolutely useless to Westport. If I had the cheerful confidence of my honourable friends opposite in all the work they are doing and inducing us to do, of course I should vote against this Bill for the present, because I should say we have supplied Greymouth with an outlet for its coal by a railway. But that railway will be illusory as a carrier of coal, though not illusory as to taking a million and a half acres of land in some part of the colony. As regards carrying coal across any of the passes, I am bound to say again—and I do so with some claim to authority—that it will be impossible to do so at a profit, and therefore, if the Greymouth collieries are to be worked at all, their output must be sent by sea. I speak with intense interest on this subject, because I think I was one of the first persons in this colony who had anything like an adequate impression as to the value of our coal property on those shores. The Greymouth coal-measures, as far as I know, are smaller than those at the Buller, but the Greymouth coal is unique in its peculiar qualities. I believe it is objected to for household purposes by some people, because it is so extremely bituminous that it cakes immediately, and the very dust of it becomes solid matter as soon as it is heated. For my own part, as I rather like poking the fire, that is not the same objection to me as it is to those who like to let the fire take care of itself. But for gas-making purposes I believe there is no coal in the world equal to that at Greymouth. I will reserve what I have to say generally on this subject till we come to the Westport Bill, because that Bill will require more assistance than this does; but I think it would be extremely unwise, after we have done so much for the export of coal, if we should now refrain. It is not now a matter of speculation-it is an absolute fact that this coal is desired in Australia. It is used in Melbourne in large quantities, some say also in Sydney, and it would be extremely undesirable that we should neglect that market. The Greymouth coal is used wherever it can be got in New Zealand, and the demand for it will increase The river at Greymouth is smaller steadily. than that at Westport, and the harbour will not be of so extensive a character, nor the works so liable to injury by natural causes, as at Westport. The neck of the job there is broken, and I think it would be a great pity if we held our hands from finishing it. But it is not without a feeling of regret that I see this question come before us at the time it does. I must say to my honourable friends opposite again and again that, whatever borrowing Bill comes up, I envy—no, I wonder at—the light-heartedness with which they go into such affairs, with the colony in the state it is in. I think the position of the colony is not adequately appreciated by them. When almost quately appreciated by them. When almost every bit of property in the colony is mortgaged; when the Customs revenue shows not the slightest symptom of elasticity; when we throw up our hats because the receipts of a

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single quarter have risen to what they were in 1882—and that through a quantity of sugar being taken out of bond in anticipation of an increase of duty-when that is the state of affairs, and everybody is full of anxiety, we plunge into all these schemes with the forlorn hope that some good will come somewhere or other, and that somebody—it may be ourselves -will be able to get out of the very awkward position by means of a spurt. Under these circumstances, I cannot help feeling some serious doubt at every expense we propose incurring. But, if there is any expenditure asked of us at the present time and under our present circumstances which I should feel bound to support, it is precisely this. It is the collieries which, to my thinking, are the only great property in the colony which we can promptly develop at the present time. If I look over the colony, from north to south, I am bound to say there is nothing in the way of cultivation which presents itself as a serious basis for anything like a spurt; there is nothing we can expect to develop in a rapid and hasty manner to help us over our present depression and anxiety. But these coal fields really do offer at the present moment a very large and important hope. The Hon. Mr. Reynolds has pointed out in a rough way what the meaning is of working a certain number of tons per week in these collieries. Of course all these figures are more or less speculative - I do not pretend to take every figure which has been presented to us as authoritative or exact. But this I know: that you can see on that coast a development of coal such as I know of nowhere else; and I would ask one honourable member who has expressed doubt about this matter-I forget who it was-if he has ever ridden or walked across the Durham coal fields, which are the most remarkable in Europe. There you might walk over the whole county and never guess there was coal there at all. But here we have the most patent, visible evidences, such as do not exist in England at all, both as to the richness of the field and as to the value of the coal. Those evidences may be seen by any traveller who will climb up 2,000ft. and walk along under the cliffs of Mount Rochfort, and examine the coal in the bed of the Grey. And, though we may well be uneasy at the phenomena of the session, and though I cannot accept — though I admire the unity as a whole ring of rings which my honourable friends on the Government benches are engaged in supporting, yet I think we may say this: that both these proposed undertakings are almost beyond speculation, and such as we may venture upon, if we may venture upon anything fresh at all. I hope this Bill will pass, and I hope that those honourable gentlemen who are in any doubt about voting for the two Bills will remember that the Buller Coal Field is the more important, both because it has more bearing upon our manufacturing industries, and because undoubtedly there is a desire in Australia to obtain large supplies of this coal. The Hon. Mr. Waterhouse pooh-poohed the idea that we can make an export of our coal; but, though I

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am on almost all occasions inclined to defer to my honourable friend's judgment in such matters, yet I do not doubt for a moment that there can be a large export of West Coast coal. I have it on authority such as I cannot refuse—that of an honourable member of the other House whom I have known for many years, whose veracity I perfectly rely on—that the Victorian Government have requested the company at the Buller to offer for a contract When I know on very advantageous terms. that, I cannot doubt that the prospects of the affair are on the whole very good and favourable; and, though the proposed expenditure is large in one case, yet I think it is a reasonable expenditure to make. If we can compete in the Melbourne market with Newcastle coal, surely we can compete elsewhere. The real fact is that our coal is of very superior quality. The coal of the Buller will compare not to its disadvantage with the coal of South Wales, and the coal at the Greymouth will compare with that of Newcastle in England. That seems to me a cool view of the matter. I am very far from venturing on the prognostications I have heard as to the extent of possible export opera-tions, but I believe it is distinctly proved that an export may be made, and that upon very advantageous terms; and I certainly think that the colony will be supplied with coal from its own mines, and that any import of coal will cease. Then, the growth of the demand for our steam service is something enormous. It is growing day by day; steam is destined probably almost to supersede the wind as a means of progress over the ocean. There seems to me little doubt that in the course of a very short life it will be so. I think it is proved that not only will our own consumption be entirely supplied from these collieries, but we may fairly expect a considerable export, owing to the very good quality of these coals. I hope both Bills will be passed, and that sanctioning the comparatively small amount for Greymouth will not prevent us from authorizing the larger undertaking at Westport. I wish to say that I very much regret the form in which the Bills are brought down. I think, as in the more exaggerated case of the railway, so in this, that the Government should have frankly and completely admitted that, as this is a large colonial property we are going to develop, the works should be made colonial works in the fullest sense of the term. But a Board is appointed as a mere screen for the Government in the money-market, where we shall have a new class of debentures of all patterns flying about. appears to me that the true way of dealing with the matter is for the Government to undertake it in the ordinary way as a public work, and I very much regret it should be undertaken There are several reasons why it otherwise. is to be regretted that the Government have not taken a different course in this matter. One is, that there should be no attempt to deceive the money-market in London. short-sighted to try to disguise the fact that the colony is borrowing. We pay extra interest for the attempt; but those who have the

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management of the money-market know better, and are not to be misled by our devices; and the issuing of debentures for all sorts of oddsand-ends of subjects which are really liabilities of the colony, and which will in the end be acknowledged to be liabilities of the colony, as the provincial debentures were in 1867, will have an injurious effect on our general credit. That is execrable finance, and, as I said on a former occasion, it is not candid finance, and

therefore not well for the colony.

The Hon. Mr. G. R. JOHNSON.—I feel that in all these harbour works there is some · amount of uncertainty and doubt as to the results of the expenditure. But we have in this case the recommendation of Sir John Coode, and I think we may fairly expect that, if the money is properly expended, the results will be satisfactory. Assuming that to be so, it is my intention to support the second reading of this Bill, and I can only say I wish there was as good a prospect of a fair result for the colony in every undertaking we have had placed before us. I was opposed to the Bill which lately passed through this Council, proposing to carry out a railway from the East to the West Coast. My reason was that I do not think there will be any satisfactory results from any under-taking of that description for many years, and I think that could well stand over for a time. This, however, I think is an undertaking which will very speedily prove to be justified. There can be no question about the character of the coal, and therefore I will not say more about that, as it has been dealt with by several honourable members who have preceded me. As to the question of the export of the coal, I am satisfied myself that it is only a question of the possibility of large vessels being able to get in and out of the harbours, and I have reason to believe that there will be an ample market for all the coal we can produce. Under these circumstances, I think that the prospect of success is a good one. I agree with the Hon. Mr. Richmond that it is unfortunate we should have all these propositions brought in at a time when the colony is hardly in a position to deal with them. That parts of the colony are at the present time in a state of much depression there can be no doubt. There is evidence of that, and I think that an attempt to borrow money in order to carry out those works at the present time simply shows that there is an extreme anxiety to get money in order, if possible, to produce an unnatural prosperity, and, as it were, to inflate trade. This Bill, however, relates to a part of the country which I believe is as free from that state of things as any part of New Zealand, and I do not think any great harm will arise from the expendi-ture there of this money. What I do regret, though, is that the Government is, as it were, parting with all its property, or nearly all, in this district. It would have been better if the Government had all its coal property there in its hands now, because it seems as if we were voting money for particular companies; and in this particular case at Greymouth I think I am right in saying it would appear we

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are assisting persons who are already in a very good position indeed. However, that is not the question we have really to deal with. Our object is to develop trade and increase the population in that district by increasing the output of coal. I see an amendment proposed to increase the royalty to the Government, and so the Government will, I take it, be to a cer-tain extent recouped. That and the Customs duties are what we have to look to; so I regret that it is proposed to hand over the railways as a security under this Bill. It is proposed, as I take it, to give any net returns from those railways to the Harbour Boards. I think that is a mistake. I would not so much object to giving reserves, but I think the railways ought to be left entirely under the control of the Government, and that the two Harbour Boards should have no interest whatever in them. I have no further objections to make. I shall vote for the second reading of this Bill, and it is my intention to vote for the other Bill also, simply because I believe it will be money well invested, which will give a good return to the colony.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY .-- When, this afternoon, I moved the second reading of this Bill, I was under the impression that I should have a very difficult task to perform; but I am happy to say that every honourable mem-ber who has addressed the Council has more or less assisted me in performing that duty. I am somewhat surprised at one or two inconsistencies I have heard, such as that, though it is a time of depression, the Government should place on the estimates a large sum of money for the purpose of carrying out these important works. Such arguments as those are neither sense nor logic, and have no reason in them. The reason the Government have not placed a sum for these works on the estimates is based on the very depression which exists; but they hope to find from other resources a means of removing that depression. My honourable friend shakes his head; but he is one who is most—well, lugubrious, I was going to say, in the matter. This is not the first time I have heard my honourable friend make suggestions of this kind. I have not risen for the purpose of replying to anything that has been said, for there is nothing to reply to, but out of deference to the Hon. Dr. Pollen, whose merest suggestion in this Council is entitled to weight. Respecting that question, I think it my duty to refer to it for the purpose of easing his conscience. I refer him to the 18th section of the Bill, which, I think, meets the objection. I have nothing further to say, because there is really nothing to reply to.

Bill read a second time.

WESTPORT HARBOUR BOARD BILL.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Sir, in moving the second reading of the Bill which has just now been read a second time, I intimated to the Council that the discussion on the one Bill would necessarily be the discussion of the other. I am under the impression that

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every argument which could be used on one side or the other has been fairly used by members of this Council, and I think I should be trifling with the intelligence of the Council were I in any way whatever to refer more to this Bill than to say that one is practically the sequence of the other. My own impression as to the reason why the two Bills were not one was that it was necessary to have two Boards. There is scarcely a line of difference between the one Bill and the other, excepting in the names "Greymouth" and "Westport." I will not trouble the Council further, but will ask you, as a matter of justice, having passed the one Bill, to be good enough to read the other a second time.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.—I desire to say to my honourable friend the Colonial Secretary that the answer he was good enough to give me just now was specious but not quite satisfactory. He has shown us a new way to pay old debts. "The Westland and Nelson Coal Fields Administration Act, 1877," has made provision for the payment of the sum of £145,511 12s. 6d., which was charged upon the revenues to be derived, first, from the Westland Colliery Reserve, and, next, from the Buller Coal Field Reserve of 114,000 acres, the proceeds of which were pledged as security for that amount. This Bill is very much in the same position as the Greymouth Harbour Bill. No provision appears to have been made in any shape or form for meeting these liabilities. No responsibility is imposed by the Bill upon the Harbour Board to make any provision whatever for the payment of interest and sinking fund upon this debt. How it is to be done I do not understand from what my honourable friend has been good enough to tell me. He says to me that the last clause of this Bill disposes of that matter. I must say that it does dispose of it in what I am inclined to call an excessively dishonest manner. This is what it says: "So much of 'The Westland and Nelson Coal Fields Administration Act, 1877, as is repugnant to, or in conflict with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed." We undertake, in one Act, to make provision for the payment of £145,000, and are now invited to say that it is not of the least consequence-that we will put that on one side, and make things extremely pleasant by saying that anything in that Act "repugnant" to this other one is of no consequence. Now, I think it is a very serious question. I am not at all opposing either one Bill or the other, but I do hope that there will be some decent observance of public faith in the matter, and that, where an undertaking is given, where a specific security is given for recouping a particular loan, that debt should not be disposed of in such an off-hand manner as this. And I am more than sorry to see a gentleman whose sobriety in finance is matter of notoriety treating a question of this kind with such extreme levity. I shall give my honourable friend an opportunity to give some explanation upon this subject. I assure him that, when the Bill goes into Committee, I shall not be content without more information

on the subject than he has been good enough. to give me.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND.—I am not aware of what the feeling of the Council is about this Bill, but the threat that one should be taken and the other left has rather distressed me. I do not want to deal dishonestly with any observations about this Bill. If I could only feel sure what honourable members are going to vote for the Bill, I should be able to sit down in peace. I have very much interest in this particular measurean interest entirely apart from interest in the. common meaning of the word as it has been used in this Council. First of all, I wish to say that, whatever may be the value of this East and West Coast Railway, it is absolutely useless for Westport, supposing the carrying of coal over Arthur's Pass or the Lewis Pass at a profit should be performed, which I take upon myself to say is impossible, short of a miracle. If that were possible, still it would not be the least help to Westport. To get to Westport the line would have to cross over a second saddle a thousand feet high, and that would be the last straw that would break the camel's back. You would have to go a hundredmiles farther to get to Westport, and over a pass which would be considered a mountain in England. In England railways would be considered to be unfit to carry mineral traffic if anordinary passenger were conscious of a rise in the line. The Great Northern line actually found it worth while to enter into a treaty with the Great Eastern line to carry their minerals round by Lincolnshire rather than pass over an invisible summit in Nottingham. I think that is enough to dispose of the East and West Coast Railway as an outlet for the coal of Westport. If the Westport Coal Field is to be developed something must be done for the port. As I have already said, the interest I have taken in this matter dates back from a great many years ago. From my own observation I can say that the coal-bearing strata are visible to any passing stranger as they crop up in different places, and extend far inland. To my knowledge the coal area reaches more than twenty miles from Westport on one side, and I do not know how much on the other, but it is very extensive, and breaks out in other places, even to Cape Farewell. If the other railway schemes are wild, it is a compara tively reasonable scheme to carry coal along the line to Westport; and Westport is, by the existence of Cape Foulwind promontory, the river best protected against the prevalent southwest winds. It is an enormous river, and very troublesome to deal with, as the Hon. Sir George Whitmore has said. In the narrows it is known to rise to 60ft.; but in the lower part, though an immense body of water comes down, for four miles there is comparatively still water. It is certain that, if we expend money wisely there, a harbour can be obtained equal to a coal traffic such as the coal traffic of Sunder-land or Newcastle. There is room and facility there for staiths and docks, and nothing whatever to prevent it becoming a very fine coal

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port, with the exception of the bar, which, from the power of the river, and the great power of the sea acting on the loose sand, is a very difficult thing to deal with; but, if we may judge from experience in carrying out the propositions of Sir John Coode at Greymouth, I think we may say that that can be cured, and that the channel can be confined so as to obtain a reliable depth on the bar at times. This done, what remains is only a question of time, and, of course, of money. The coal, as far as I know, is everywhere good. In 1863, I think it was, the Provincial Government sent down samples of it to the Otago Industrial Exhibition; and they also, at the same time, sent samples of the Greymouth coal to England, and the report upon it was as encouraging as it could possibly be. In consequence of this, and seeing that people had already got some notion that it was a valuable field and were taking up leaseholds, the Land Board, at my desire, undertook to strain the law a little, and, by drawing three lines on the map, prevented a large portion of this beautiful coal field from being spotted by speculators; and these remain on that map to the present day. We went a step further, and, in laying out the Town of Westport, we looked forward twenty years, and set aside a piece of ground for a coal and railway dépôt, which has remained, I believe, up to the present time, and is now used for that purpose. I refer to these things because my excuse for taking part in this debate is the early in-terest I took in this matter. I may say that I never had, and never intend to have, a single share in the colliery. I have some shares in a small colliery at Golden Bay. That was brought before the Government, but it was one of those humble little things that are hardly ever worthy of place in a Public Works Statement. I do not say it was rejected with contempt; but it was rejected—calmly, as something not worth taking notice of. I asked for £5,000 to make a wharf at Golden Bay for our little collieries in the neighbourhood. But the fact that there is a large interest in Westport cannot for a moment divert my mind from the fact that there is an enormous colonial property which ought to be dealt with. Reference has been made to the Westport Coal Company, and I think it is only fair to put on record one or two facts I have gathered from the register. I believe it is in the hands of the Hon. Sir George Whitmore. I took this from a copy made by a momber in another place. I think the bona fides of the company is perfectly clear. The company was started; it was unable to get on for want of further sums of money; its operations were crippled, and it had to be re-formed. There certainly was a too flourishing advertisement of it published in the Australasian, to which reference has been made. But what are the practical facts? The company has a nominal capital of \$2400,000 in 80,000 shares. The amount paid up on these shares is £133,830: that is, about one-third of the whole nominal capital has actually been paid up. I think, if the Haka-

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teramea Railway and some other railways had shown an account like that, we should not have turned out the little Bill that appeared before us very lately. Then, there is an amount of £2,000 due on unpaid calls. The number of shares taken up appears to be 72,000 out of 80,000, the number of shareholders being 540. The amount of £130,000 odd having been put into the undertaking, plainly shows the share-holders to be more than mere speculators. I think that the colony ought not only not to be jealous of this, but ought to encourage it, for this investment has been a reasonable and not a speculative affair. To encourage people to make railways over the tops of the mountains, where probably there will be no traffic, is a thing we should not favour.

An Hon. Member.—You favoured it.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND. - My honourable friend is mistaken. I voted against it several times. I consider it is the duty of the colony not to encourage people to do that sort of thing; but I do think that the work now proposed is fair and reasonable, and that the colony should encourage it; and I think it is not justice to the colony or to these share-holders that we refuse to make the ports accessible because, in doing that, we should enable them to make a decent profit upon their investment. I doubt if the £400,000, when it is all expended, will be more than enough for their work. The work is exceedingly difficult, and I feel, with respect to the mines and with respect to this Bill, that they and we are short of proper information on the subject. I have an objection to that, but the objection does not go so far as to induce me to oppose the Bill. We are disposed to go heels over head in this direction, without any adequate knowledge of what we are to do, or of our finances. The Government seem to know very little about it, and I doubt if any member in this House knows more than they do. I am not saying this in any hostile spirit. I look upon my honourable friend opposite with the greatest good-will—almost with affection—and I shall be very glad to see him sitting there for a long time to come. But I do not think it is reasonable or businesslike for us to oppose a proposal of this kind, which is not one for opening this particular mine, or any other two or three mines, but is a question of opening up the whole of this coal field. These proposals, if carried into effect, will not only increase the royalty and the Customs duties-there is another point that we cannot neglect. We have a large industry, the industry of the farmer and the wheat grower, who want a market for their produce; and the increase of the population will be of enormous value. I do not know what we are going to do for our agricultural interests. If we can do anything in the way of increasing the manufacturing or mining population of the country, the permanent population, we shall do good to the whole country; and the farmers will be able to stagger along a little longer under the burden of an insane protective policy, if they only get a market here at home. Although I do not like to differ 1884.1

from my honourable friend Mr. Waterhouse, I hardly think he was right when he said that the markets in New South Wales are inaccessible to us. I am perfectly satisfied that the Victorian Government have actually asked the Buller company to undertake a contract to supply 150,000 tons of coal at a price said to be 5s. per ton over that paid for Newcastle coal. If that is the case, I think the objection of my honourable friend is answered. If we can get in Melbourne for New Zealand coal an advance of 5s. per ton upon the price of Newcastle coal, surely we are in fair position for competing throughout the wide markets of Australia and India. There is also South America, to which we are nearer than New South Wales. And we have yet to fill up the gap in providing for our own consumption of 150,000 tons. Then, there are growing steam-services, and engineers admit that the Buller coal is very much superior to any other fuel for steam purposes. There is our own local steamservice and the steam-service direct with Great Britain, the San Francisco line; and, if we are to carry out the ideas of the Imperial Government as to defence—and those who love peace should be ready for war-it will be a great advantage to have readily accessible in our great ports a supply of the finest coal in the world. I hope that no single member will vote on the present occasion on any narrow or local views. I have never entertained such views. When I landed on these shores I landed as a New Zealand colonist. I hope that my honourable friends on the opposite benches will see from what I am saying now that any vote I have given in this Council has been not in hostility to them. I am willing to pick the plums out of any Ministerial policy, but not to consume the indigestible part as well; and if the Government had brought down no Bills more objectionable than these I should have had little to say against them. I repeat, however, that these harbours should have been undertaken openly by Government. To put them forward as local affairs is a sham; our right plan is to be straightforward, and let our perfect candour be known in the English money-market. The sham is, however, transparent. "The attempt, and not the deed, confounds us." I have heard in the lobbies a hint that out of these miscellaneous debentures there are good pickings to be had for negotiators, which could not be got out of inscribed stock. We may feel very grateful to the Bank of England for having declined, as we learn by telegram, in future to inscribe any loans which they do not themselves negotiate. That is one reason more for people in this colony refusing to entangle our finances by this variety of debentures, which we have on former occasions had to sweep away. I shall vote for this Bill with all my heart.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.-It is not my intention to reopen the discussion which practically took place on the Bill when the motion for the second reading of the Grey-mouth Harbour Board Bill was under consideration, although I may distinctly say that, if I were inclined to do so, my honourable are working it now. They were working it a

friend Mr. Richmond, in the speech he has just made, has given us good reasons why we should not pass this Bill or the other one at the present time. I can only say, Sir, that the action I indicated to the Council as to the course I proposed to adopt in reference to these Bills is one that I still intend to take. There is one matter which has cropped up which I think this is a suitable opportunity to refer to, and that is in reference to the leases of the coal mines which exist in both these localities. Honourable members are aware that for some years past there has been great remissness on the part of the Government in enforcing the provisions of such leases; the mines are not being worked in accordance with the provisions of the leases; and the Government have not enforced their right to foreclose and bring those leases into the market, and thus make them available for working by persons who would work them efficiently. This is especially the case with the Westport Coal Company, who have large and valuable leases in addition to that at Westport. If I am correctly informed, this mine is supposed to be the most valuable mine of those leased from the Government in the locality. For a considerable time past this mine has not been worked at all. The conditions of the lease have not been fulfilled, and yet no steps have been taken to render it available to the public. The result is that a most valuable property is now locked up. In these two Bills we are authorizing the expenditure of very large sums of money—which we may regard as being expended by the Government—on these harbours; and I think it is reasonable that we should expect that, if the Government advances money for the improvement of these localities in the way proposed under these Bills, the provisions of the leases should be strictly enforced, that the large and valuable properties should not be allowed to lie idle when other persons or companies are prepared to work these mines. I think we shall have great cause to complain of the action of the Government if these Bills are passed into law, and these mines are allowed to remain unworked. The provisions of the leases ought to be strictly enforced, and I trust that we shall have in this debate some intimation from my honourable friend the Colonial Secretary, as representing the Government in this House, that it is the intention of the Government to see that they are strictly enforced.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—Sir, I should not have risen again on this Bill were it not for the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse. I do not know where he has picked up his information, but, so far as I am informed, it is altogether wrong. The company has laid out over £60,000 upon that property. There have been several difficulties to overcome, I admit, in connection with the mine, but they are now working at it steadily, I am informed, and I believe my information is correct.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Are they

working now?

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—I believe they

very short time ago, although they might not be at the present moment.

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The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN.—Nor for many months.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—How many? The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN.—At least seven or eight.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS. — If the Hon. Mr. Lahmann states so, I must take it as correct; but why they have stopped for the last seven or eight months I cannot say. have paid their rent regularly, and there is not a penny due; and I do not know what more

the colony can want.

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN.-I can only say, Sir, that the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse has stated things correctly. The mine in question has not been worked for the last eight or nine months: not that there were any impediments in the way, except in regard to the laying-out of money. The honourable gentleman says the company have paid their rent. But it was not the rent which was the chief condition—it was Their the raising a certain amount of coal. having paid their rent is nothing: it is only £20 or £30 a year. I think what the Government did was very wrong; but it was not the present Government, but the late Government, that did it. As late as June last the late Government sold 125 acres of land at the price of £5 per acre, containing perhaps the best coal field in the colony. The late Government has been guilty of setting aside all the conditions of the lease, and sold the land to the company sooner than they had a right to do. Sir, though I cannot be accused of partiality for Westport, nevertheless I hope and trust that, as the Greymouth Harbour Board Bill has been passed, the Council will agree to the Westport Harbour Board Bill; for there can be no doubt that this company is a most enterprising one. The question to be decided by this Council is, Will the colony at large lose or be benefited by spending this sum of money to improve the Westport Harbour? Knowing the district as I do, and its resources, and judging from what I have seen of the works, as undertaken in accordance with Sir John Coode's report, I can only say that the colony will do well to spend a certain amount of money there, and will not be the losers by it. I am not so sanguine as to think, as the Hon. Mr. Reynolds does, that millions of tons can be raised by one or two companies. That is next to impossible. It is only to be hoped that they will raise a sufficient amount of coal to keep up a healthy competition; and it cannot be denied that the Buller River is the very best river for large vessels on the West Coast. If this Bill is carried, and large vessels can enter the ports, freights will be less, and coals will be made 25 per cent. cheaper than they are at present. hope, considering all the circumstances, the Council will do justice to the district and pass the second reading of the Bill.

The Hon. Mr. ACLAND .- I should be very sorry to see this Bill thrown out, after the Greymouth Harbour Board Bill has passed its second reading, on the ground that two coal

Hon, Mr. Reynolds

fields are not required. One honourable member this afternoon asked what good the mines would be to the colony, and he said that to carry these Bills would be merely to put money in the hands of private individuals. would be some truth in that if the money went to a foreign company; but by keeping the money in the colony it will be circulated here, and do good to the place. We may fairly hope, also, that we shall get money from outside. There was an offer from Victoria to take 150,000 tons of this Westport coal, which would pro-bably be £1 per ton, or £150,000, to come into the colony. That would not all go into the hands of private individuals; some of it would be spent in the shipping of the colony, and work would be provided for the unemployed; and, then, there is the advantage to the whole public that coals would be much cheaper. retailed here now, coal is nearly £2 per ton, and a reduction of 25 per cent. would be an advantage to consumers, especially seeing that the coal is of such a superior quality. I do not think we need be afraid of raising more coal than is wanted. In a few years we shall find that, with railways increasing and factories springing up, we shall have plenty of use for it. But even supposing one company could raise as much coal as we could use, which I doubt very much, I should be sorry to give them the monopoly.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—I had hoped that the one discussion would suffice for these two Bills. I am sorry to see my friends around me take up the position they have done in regard to this Bill, because, in my opinion, it is a wrong one. If their arguments are of any weight at all, they should have supported this Harbour Bill, and not the Greymouth Harbour Bill. But I do not think their arguments are such that they ought to weigh very much with the members of the Council in voting upon this Bill. It is stated that a number of members are interested in this Bill. I do not care for that: they have put their money into the work, and that is their business. But the getting-out of this coal is a matter of colonial concern, especially if we can reduce the price of coal by 5s. per ton. It must be remembered that the coal at Groymouth is very different from that at Westport. Westport has got on a seam of coal the like of which does not exist in the colony. I know that there are inquiries for Greymouth coal to go far outside the Australian Colonics at the present moment, so that the export of it is no such light matter as some honourable members seem to think. With reference to the leases referred to by a previous speaker, I venture to say that the position taken by the late Minister of Lands towards the companies on the Coast was such that he would not allow them to get one sixpence that they were not entitled to.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.-Nor will

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—And, if they did, I should say nothing to them. It is said, "Why not enforce the conditions of these leases immediately?" Well, we know that the Koranui 1884.)

Company have sunk thousands of pounds on their property, thus showing their faith in it. They have lost their money; therefore this Council should not be too hard on them in trying to develop the resources of the West Coast. 'I hold that the gentlemen on the Government benches should have a little care for the misfortune of those who invest their money in that direction. I wish to say what I have said on behalf of the late Minister of Lands because of the position he has taken up towards these companies. I do not know that I have anything more to say. I hope my honourable friends around me will withdraw their opposi-

tion and allow this Bill to pass. The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—I do not wish to prolong the debate on the second reading of this Bill; but it has been said that no money is required under this Bill-only the Government guarantee, which is a mere form. Well, some of us who have lived a little in the world know the value of that. If a person is asked to sign his name to a document, as a rule he is told that it is only a matter of form. Here the Governor has to declare the loan guaranteeda perfectly simple thing, involving no liability. With regard to the statistics that have been quoted with reference to the output, there is no doubt that there is an immense quantity of coal there; but how far it can be properly raised is another matter. This point has never been considered at all by any speaker on either Bill; but, suppose it should turn out that the harbour was not a success, then the company will lose the whole of the money. The Hon. Mr. Reynolds has instanced—as he generally does—some historical event in support of his argument, which he thinks unanswerable. He has alluded to the improvement in the Ts; and a very great improvement it is, as I can say, having seen them; but I think we should find that the Board of Commissioners, or whoever found the money for the improvement of the Ts, had better credit than is provided here. In fact, there is no security in this Bill whatever. Let us look that in the face. It only says that, if the Minister thinks proper, then the guarantee of the colony can be given for a sum of £150,000, in the first instance, and no more is to be raised unless the assent of Parliament is obtained; but, if the first £150,000 is raised, I have no doubt whatever that Parliament will assent to raise the further sum of £350,000. We shall be told at once that, if we do not raise the further sum, the money which has already been spent will be lost. have had very painful experience of that. It invariably happens that individuals have not the courage to put up with their first loss, but they go on to the extreme; and it will be so in this case. I do not wish to depreciate what these companies have done; no doubt they have invested large sums of money; but I think they should have shown judgment and should not have spent such large sums on their mines without seeing how they were going to get the coal away. It is grievous for any one to see money squandered in bad speculations; but these companies have spent their money,

and I must say that this proposal to spend half a million of money, on such information as we have, is wrong. I am impressed also with this: that only two days ago we passed a Bill involving, as well as I recollect, three-fourths of a million of money in the shape of land for a railway which is to compete with these harbours. Undoubtedly the harbours and the railway will compete. It is quite possible that they will all fail; and what does that mean? It means that a million and a half of money would be spent for nothing. I have the gravest doubt about it, and I believe that we are going too fast in these things. We rush into things with insufficient data. I have read Sir John Coode's report, and, with all respect to him, I am not sure that he can give advice in the conditions which prevail in this river. We know that it sometimes rises 60ft. in the night; and look at the amount of débris that it then brings down. I doubt whether, even if these works which are to cost half a million of money should be carried out, there would be any reasonable certainty that there would be a good harbour after all. I believe it is a fact that the works which have already been carried out so far have rather lessened than increased the depth of water. That is not encouraging, and the whole argument brought forward has assumed as a basis that failure is impossible. The Hon. Mr. Acland assumed as a matter of course that there could be no loss to the colony; that the money will come to the colony; that a large population will flow in; and that coal will become very cheap. But, supposing you do not obtain the depth of water you expect, the colony loses the whole of the money. That is a very serious affair. Although I regret to stand in the way of progress, I cannot help thinking that all this is very injurious. I must say that it was a great deal too much for me to pass that railway in the hurried manner we did. That staggered me very much. Now, we have passed the Greymouth Harbour Bill, involving, it is true, a smaller amount of money — only £100,000. We have acceded to that; but I do think that to ask us to accede to the raising of this halfmillion is rather too much. I think it would be a prudent thing for this work to be held over till next session, until we can obtain some better information on the subject.

Board Bill.

The Hon. Mr. BONAR. — The honourable gentleman who has just spoken accuses us of coming to conclusions on the matters before us on insufficient data. Now, I am sorry to say he has come to his conclusions on imperfect data when he says that the East and West Coast Railway could be of use in taking coal from Westport. Why, Sir, this railway would not run within sixty miles of Westport, and there is an insurmountable barrier of hills which renders it impossible that Westport coal could be carried by that railway. That point, therefore, is easily disposed of. Another point the Hon. Mr. Wilson raised is as to whether the works on the plans proposed by Sir John Coode are likely to succeed. The honourable gentleman seems to throw considerable doubt as to

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the certainty of Sir John Coode's plans giving the result of 16 ft. of water on the bar at Westport. The result of the work carried on upon Sir John Coode's plans at Greymouth has already proved that the advice he gave was sound and well-judged; and that should give us full confidence that good results will follow from the carrying-out of his plans at Westport. I can support the statement of the Hon. Mr. Richmond that Westport is especially well situated for works of this kind. It has got a natural protection from the Needles, and from Cape Foulwind, and there are rocks which make the entrance almost perfectly smooth in the roughest southerly gales, and which will give large protection to the training-walls proposed to be made. I have no doubt that if we once erect these walls we shall have in the Buller a much better harbour, with very much deeper water, than at Greymouth, where, as I have said, Sir John Coode's plans have, so far, succeeded very well. The Hon. Mr. Wilson also said that the Buller sometimes rises 60ft. in a night; but he does not say that this is not at the mouth of the river, but in the Gorges, some miles up, where the stream is very closely confined. But, though the river often rises very considerably at the mouth, it has never shown anything approaching such a rise as that mentioned by the honourable gentleman; but the fact that so large a body of water often comes down is an additional guarantee that the channel will be kept clear, and that all the  $d\epsilon bris$  will be swept away if the training-walls are constructed so as to confine the water within a reasonable channel. no doubt whatever that the works carried out at Greymouth, and also to a limited extent at Hokitika, as far as proposed by Sir John Coode, will answer all the purposes intended. Coming to another point, it was argued, when the other Bill was before us, that one port would be sufficient to supply the coal for the requirements of the colony, and for any export trade there might be. Now, I find by certain statements put forward, which are guaranteed by the good faith of a member of the other House and of an influential Committee, that the Westport Company were obliged to decline a tender for 150,000 tons for the Victorian railways, and also 70,000 tons for the Melbourne Gasworks; and they also declined negotiations with the South Australian people for supplying them with coal for smelting-works, and also with a Noumean com-pany for the supply of coke. These are simply a few of the outlets that have been referred to. As I said before, the Westport Company have sufficient information to justify them in assuming that, if they could get out large vessels drawing 16ft. of water—and that is no great depth, because even now there is sometimes that depth of water on the bar-there is a fair chance of an outside market for something like three million tons a year. The different places to which coal could be sent are: the Cape of Good Hope, Mauritius, Java, Ceylon, India, Singapore and the neighbouring islands, China and Hongkong, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Fiji and other islands, San Francisco,

Westport Harbour

Peru, Chili, and elsewhere in South America These are the places to which it is believed that that large amount of coal could be sent; but, assuming that only half that amount were exported, still the export trade would be very considerable. Now, we find, from the reports, that at Westport they could now turn out 750,000 tons per annum. Of course that amount might be increased as other mines were opened. If we take the three mines at the Grey, only two of which are now working, they could turn out 450,000 tons, and the two fields together would only yield 1,200,000 tons; and surely that is not an exceptional amount to look at when we have to supply the whole colony, even saying nothing of export. We at present import from Newcastle over a hundred thousand tons of coal a year; but, still, even with the present facilities-and there are now a large number of steamers engaged in the West Coast coal trade—it is not within the bounds of reason to suppose that one port would be capable of supplying the wants of the colony, to say nothing of a demand from outside places. I do trust the Bill will receive the support of the Council, as it certainly has

my hearty support.

The Hon Mr. WILLIAMSON.—I should like to say that, when the debate was opened, I felt very much inclined to go with the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse, and I am not entirely convinced now that I should not adhere to that view of the case. I think it will be admitted by honourable members that there is somewhat of speculation in making these two harbours; and, as there is speculation about it, would it not, in the present state of the colony, be sufficient if we tried one of the harbours first? I think the Hon. Mr. Bonar said that increasing the output would cheapen the coal—that you cannot work a mine putting out small quantities cheaply, and the larger the output the more cheaply you can supply coal. Now, I think it is to the interest of the colony to open coal mines, not all in one district, but in as many parts of the colony as possible. I do not agree that the West Coast should have the supplying of the colony with all its coal. There are a great many places from which coal can be and is obtained. Coal is a heavy material, and its carriage long distances is very expensive. There is coal—not of the same quality, I admit, as that of the Buller and the Grey-at many points from the extreme north to the extreme south of New Zealand. In the North Island at several places there is coal that answers all purposes for stationary engines and all household purposes, and that coal can be worked much more cheaply than the coal either at the Grey or at the Buller can be worked and brought to those places. Now, I think the colony should endeavour to open fields in different parts of the colony, and so cheapen coal; because it is not the money that is expended or earned by the men working a coal mine that makes the great value of coal-mining to a country-it is the industries which follow the cheapening of coal that are the great advantage, and the more you can cheapen the production

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of coal the more industries you will have in the colony. I have heard—I am not capable of saying myself whether it is so or not-that the coal at Greymouth is good for gas; but is there any coal at Greymouth also good for steaming purposes?
The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN.—Yes; the same

coal.

The Hon. Mr. WILLIAMSON.—If there is, my opinion is that, as the colony is at present circumstanced, it would be quite sufficient to go on with the Greymouth works; and, if that proved a success, the colony could, in the course of a few years, when probably it would be in a better position, go on to open up West-port. It would not be logical in me to say that Westport should not be opened, unless I assigned some reason. It is, as I understand, so placed that greater capital would be required to enable Westport to supply coal than would be required in the case of Greymouth; so that, if it is thought that Greymouth would supply all demands in the colony at the present time, and all demands likely to arise for some years, then I think the colony would be doing what was right if the experiment with these harbours was, in the first place, confined to one of them, and, of course, we should be able to go on with the other if the demand for coal justified incurring additional outlay at any time.

The Council divided on the question, "That the Bill be read a second time."

AYES, 22.

Fraser Acland McLean Baillie Grace Miller Barnicoat Henderson Peacock Johnson, G. R. Pharazyn Bonar Brett Pollen Kohero Buckley, G. Lahmann Reynolds Buckley, P. A. Martin Reeves. Dignan

Chamberlin Nurse

Nozs, 5. Waterhouse Williamson

Wilson.

PAIR.

For. Richmond, J. C.

Against. Whitmore.

Majority for, 17.

Bill read a second time.

The Council adjourned at eleven o'clock p.m.

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Tuesday, 28th October, 1884.

First Beading—A. Kidd and Others—Currency and Government Land Bank—Hospitals and Charitable Aid—T. T. Patuki—Mines Act—The Queen v. Maloney and Hughes—E. Rollerson and Others—W. Docherty—Acheron Coal—Lakes District Court—Maniototo Land—Westport Colliery Company—Waikato—Thames Railway—Marton—Murimotu Roed Repairs—Tricycles for Post and Telegraph Delivery—Hawke's Bay-Central Railway—Tolegraph Employes—Railway Employés' Back Pay—Native Lands Sottlement Bill—Population, &c., of Provincial Districts—Wairoa County Re-&c., of Provincial Districts-Wairoa County Revenue and Expenditure—New Zealand International South Sea Trading Company Bill—East and West Coast (Middle Island) and Nelson Railway and Railways Construction Bill—Land Bill.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READING. Fisheries Conservation Bill.

A. KIDD AND OTHERS.

Mr. FULTON moved, That the report of the Public Petitions Committee on the petition of A. Kidd and others be laid on the table.

Mr. MOSS moved, as an addition to the motion, "and that the Government be requested to specially examine the allegations of the petitioners that they have suffered by retrospective legislation on the part of this Parliament." He would not have taken this unusual course were it not that the whole circumstances were most unusual. He did not suppose there was another case in which retrospective legislation had been attempted to give a legal right to one party in a dispute, to the prejudice of another party. He did not suppose there was another case in which the power of Parliament had been so prostituted as in the case now before the House. It was new to many honourable members, and perhaps he might be allowed to say a few words about it. Certain parties were acting as agents for the Natives. These parties happened to be the Ministers of this country; but, still, they were acting as the agents of others in this case — as the agents for certain Natives of Ohinemutu. Their officers laid out a township They spent something like at Ohinemutu. £1,000 of public money in puffing that township to an extraordinary degree. They made the most outrageous promises in respect to it. They promised that there should be a water supply,—that there should be pavilions, and all kinds of great things; and led people to believe they would very soon have established in that place a very large and flourishing township. Railways and all kinds of things were to come. They did more. They expressly limited the township to a few sections, in order that competition might be artificially stimulated, and that a higher rent might be obtained. In fact, the Government of the colony, acting as agents for the Maoris, did all that George Robins in his palmiest days in England would have done, to enhance the value of the property. Having succeeded so far, they succeeded also in inducing a few innocent persons, for whom he felt sorry, and some very knowing ones, with whom he did not so much sympathize, to lease those sections at an exorbitantly high rent. In course of time it was found out that the promises were pie-crust; and it was found out, also, by the unfortunate leaseholders, that they had been deluded, by the trust which it is usual to place in Government representations, into paying too large a sum for their leases. The consequence was that they resisted the attempt of the Government

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to collect the rent, and they found that the Government, the agents for the Maoris in this case, were so far wrong that they had no legal right to sue them. Acting upon that discovery they formed an association for their own defence, and there was not the slightest doubt that they would have been able to throw their leases back on the hands of the Maori agents had not this House, at that stage, intervened and passed a retrospective Act, which enabled the agents to go into Court and legally assert their claims. That Act, passed in 1883, was made to take effect in 1881. He thought that honourable members who were not members of the House at that time would feel astonished that such a course should have been taken. They might even doubt whether he was correct in his statement; but he could only say that he resisted it at the time to the utmost of his power. There were very few to support him, but he would have succeeded in resisting it effectually, were it not that the Government had very artfully mixed up the Thames-Rotorua Railway in the Bill, and so succeeded in passing it and rendering nugatory his attempts to stop it. All the leaseholders said was this: "If your land is worth the money you have let us have it for, if it was worth that sum then, it is worth more now, because the place is more advanced, everything is in a better condition. We are perfectly willing to sacrifice the rental we have paid; but relieve us from the liability for the future. We cannot build on the land, because it is of such a nature that a pile cannot be driven into it; if you do, up comes a stream of hot water. The whole thing is in a most shameful mess. Let us out of it, and we will hand back these sections to you: you will be none the worse; you had no right to injure us by retrospective legislation; you will have your land back, but relieve us of this liability." It was a very serious liability. They were not all wealthy men who went into these purchases. If this liability still existed at their death, a liability extending over many years, it would be a very serious thing to their families; and it was in their behalf, more especially, that he himself felt strongly in the matter. There he himself felt strongly in the matter. There happened to be one or two wealthy men who entered on these purchases, and to them it was a trifling matter. Their names were not attached to the petition. To many it was a very serious question, and he thought he was right in asking that the addition he had moved should be attached to the report of the Committee.

Mr. BALLANCE could not consent to the addition to the motion, for the following reasons: As the honourable gentleman was well aware, a case between the Commissioner of Crown Lands and one of the lessees of this reserve was now before the Supreme Court awaiting adjudication, and it appeared to him that the object of the amendment was to suspend operations in the Supreme Court. That seemed to be the clear object of the honourable gentleman. The Committee had recommended that the subject should be carefully considered by the Government. The other day the honour-

able member for Parnell asked him to suspend proceedings in the Supreme Court, and he re-fused to do so on the ground that, as the case had been brought into the Supreme Court and expense incurred, it was right the opinion of the Supreme Court should be obtained on the question at issue. He was perfectly aware that the matter was in a most unsatisfactory state; and it appeared to him that something would have to be done. What that something was he did not know. He had made inquiries on the subject, but he had been unable to obtain any information of a satisfactory nature. It was true the township was in the wrong place, and that a great deal of hardship had resulted from one cause or another. It was not merely a question of the Government taking over the whole of the responsibility in this matter. The Government was acting for the Natives, and was the trustee for the Natives. It was their duty, in his opinion, to consider the position of the Natives-how they would be affected. What right had they to say that the bargain entered into between two contracting parties—— Mr. MOSS.—Not lawfully.

Mr. BALLANCE said they had a right to assume it was lawful until that question was decided by the Supreme Court. Assuming it had been lawfully entered into, what right had they to intervene, and so by their action prejudice the rights of the Natives? they were to do so, what would be the consequence? The Government would have to take over the responsibility for the whole of the Native rights, a responsibility which would be unlimited. The report of the Committee was, to his mind, a perfectly intelligible re-port—that the Government should inquire into the whole matter. Of course he should make it his business to investigate it very carefully during the recess. He hoped nothing would be done in the House to prejudice either the position of the Government or that of the Natives.

Captain RUSSELL ventured to suggest that the honourable member for Parnell should tack his amendment on to the first notice of motion. It appeared to be an absolutely identical case. Certain people had entered into certain agreements, and, finding they had made a bad bargain, they wished to be released from them.

Mr. MOSS, by way of personal explanation, said that, when the Minister of Lands stated that he had applied to him to stay proceedings, he should have said that it was only pending the result of this petition being ascertained. The honourable gentleman had asked what right Parliament had now to intervene. If he had asked what right had Parliament to intervene on the first occasion-

Mr. SPEAKER said the honourable gentleman was now assuming the right of replying, to which he was not entitled, and not confining himself to making a personal explanation.

Mr. MOSS said he was satisfied, and had no wish to proceed further in his explanation.

Amendment negatived.

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CURRENCY AND GOVERNMENT LAND | BANK.

Mr. MACANDREW asked the Government, If they will consider as to the expediency of appointing a Royal Commission during the recess to inquire and report—(1) As to what alteration, if any, should be made in the law regulating the currency in New Zealand; (2) as to the advisability or otherwise of establishing a Government land bank, whereby advances may be obtained upon freehold land at a low rate of interest, upon some such plan or system as that under which the Government of India makes such advances? Of course, in asking this question, he was precluded from introducing debatable matter. He was aware that the first question was one upon which there existed a great difference of opinion, and it might fairly be considered debatable, and therefore he would not say anything further about it. With regard to the second part of the question, he thought that that could not be regarded as debatable, at all events. He thought he might be permitted to say that it would give an enormous impetus to the development of the agricultural and pastoral resources of the colony if some means could be devised whereby the cultivators of the soil could obtain money at a low rate of interest. He believed the whole colony would be benefited thereby. He understood that some such system prevailed in British India, but he was not exactly aware of the precise conditions of it. That there was such a provision could be gathered from various reliable sources. He had also found, from an official publication, that a sum of thirty millions sterling, up to a late date, had been advanced by the Government of India in this direction, the payments having been made in Government notes, which were legal tender throughout that part of the Empire. Of course a Royal Commission would fully ascertain the ins and outs of the matter, and also ascertain the terms on which a similar system existed in Canada, if he was not misinformed. He believed that to the existence of this provision in India might be attributed to a great extent the grain production of late years, which had so enormously increased in that part of the world. He believed a Commission really composed of practical business and unprejudiced men, whose minds were not stereotyped in the mould of the existing order of things, could not fail to devise a plan which would commend itself to this House and to the Legislature next session. He might say that he was not particularly enamoured of Royal Commissions, as honourable members knew: at the same time he believed that the Commission indicated would really be of very great service to the colony. Probably the Government would prefer-indeed, he had no doubt they would desire—to be fortified by a direct opinion on the part of the House upon this question, and with that view he had placed a notice of motion on the Supplementary Order Paper, hoping to be able to bring it on before going into Committee of Supply. He should be glad indeed if the Government could see their way to give a favourable answer to the question

he had now put, independent altogether of that notice of motion.

Government Land Bank.

Sir J. VOGEL said the question the honourable gentleman had put was one of considerable importance, and he would endeavour to answer it as fully as the limits at his command would enable him to do so. With regard to the first part of the question, he might say that the Government would consider the expediency of appointing such a Commission. He had to point out to the honourable gentleman that, unless there was good reason to think that the laws relating to currency required alteration, a Royal Commission would do a great deal more harm than good by unsettling the conditions of trade, and leading people to suppose that some material alterations were likely to be made, when such expectations might not be likely to be carried out. They had heard a great deal about the establishment of a State bank, and using paper to an unlimited extent; but he must say that, as far as he had been able to judge of any of the proposals that had been put forward, they seemed to him to be very little short of the character of a paper currency-a thing which, he need scarcely point out, would not be desirable when there was no necessity for anything of the kind. The country could obtain the money it required at a low rate of interest, and, that being so, there was no reason why they should submit to the sacrifice a paper currency entailed. The colony was not in such a position as to require to resort to this mode of obtaining money. He had said sufficient to show that he thought it was a matter that would require very great consideration before a Royal Commission should be appointed for the purpose stated in the first part of the question. But, with regard to the second part of the question, he thought the honourable member had referred to a subject which was not only of very great importance, but one which had a great hold upon the country—the question of whether, for actual improvements, the cultivators of the soil should not be able to obtain money upon much more satisfactory terms than they were able to do so at present. He should be inclined to say that it would be desirable to appoint a Royal Commission for the purpose indicated by the honourable gentleman; but, as far as he (Sir J. Vogel) was aware, there was no information available in the country upon the question. The matter had been brought before him from numerous quarters since he had been here, and he had industriously made inquiries, but he could not find that there was any information in New Zealand. Regarding the system under which the land banks in Austria and Germany which were known to be a pronounced success — were carried on, he had not been able to find any evidence. With regard to the system of making advances in India, to which the honourable gentleman referred, he was under the impression that there existed some such system, but there was no evidence available. The honourable member would no doubt agree with him that the better course for the Gover.1ment to pursue would be to send Home to

England, and possibly to India, to obtain all the information possible on the subject, and then to decide whether it was desirable to appoint a Royal Commission, or whether the Government should take the responsibility of acting upon the information themselves. As far, therefore, as obtaining the information was concerned, he was able to assure the honourable gentleman that the Government would take steps to do so; and, after receiving the information, they would judge whether it was desirable to take advantage of the other course he had referred to.

Hospitals and

#### HOSPITALS AND CHARITABLE AID.

Mr. COWAN asked the Government, If.it is their intention for the future to maintain, or to assist in maintaining, out of the consolidated revenue, the hospitals and charitable institu-tions of the colony, in a manner that is equitable to the different districts of the colony? He had been induced to ask this question after a perusal of the return laid on the table of the House, from which he had gathered the following facts. He had ascertained that there were fifteen hospitals wholly maintained in this colony during the last financial year, at a cost of £43,639. Those hospitals were as follow: Auckland, Thames, Napier, New Plymouth, Wellington, Nelson, Westport, Picton, Blenheim, Westland, Christchurch, Akaroa, Timaru, Waimate, and Dunedin. The partially-subsidized institutions were: 1 hospital, subsidized £3 for £1, Tuapeka; 2 hospitals, subsidized £2 Est of £1, Tuapeka; 2 nospitals, subsidized £2 for £1, Coromandel and Waipawa; 17 hospitals, subsidized £1 for £1, Cook, Wairarapa West, Wairarapa East, Buller, Inangahua, Grey, Westland (2 hospitals), Ashburton, Lake (2 hospitals), Vincent (2 hospitals), Maniototo, Waitaki, Southland, and Wallace; 1 hospital, half oset naid by Government, Pater, As he half cost paid by Government, Patea. As he was debarred from introducing debatable matter, he would only say that the conclusion he had come to on a perusal of this return was that a most anomalous state of matters seemed to have existed in this country recently in regard to the maintenance of these hospitals. He asked the question in the hope that the Government would intimate to the House their determination that in the future provision for the maintenance of hospitals some more equitable plan of granting assistance to these hospitals would be followed than had hitherto been

Mr. STOUT said the honourable gentleman's question alluded to one of the most difficult and, he thought, one of the most unsatisfactory matters the Government had to deal with, and that was the distribution of funds to charitable institutions and hospitals. In fact, the whole thing was in a mess, and would require great consideration and care during the recess in the way of devising some better system whereby those institutions would be properly carried on. The system would never be satisfactory so long as the Government found the funds for the purpose of maintaining these institutions, and had no proper supervision. He might repeat that

the matter would have careful consideratic during the recess.

#### T. T. PATUKI.

Mr. TAIAROA asked the Native Minister,—
(1.) What decision the Government have arrive at on the report of the Native Affairs Committee of the year 1878 on the petition of Teom Topi Patuki, praying that the Governmen would afford them some relief for their land which were sold wrongfully on the east coas of the Middle Island? (2.) If the Governmen have not arrived at any decision, in what wad they intend affording relief, if any? The reason he put this question on the Order Pape was this: In 1878 Teone Topi Patuki presented a petition to the House, and the recommendation of the Committee was that the petition should be referred to the Government. Sizyears had elapsed since the petition was presented, but the petitioner had not yet received any reply as to what would be done. It was the custom of different Governments to defere replying to Native petitions.

replying to Native petitions.

Mr. BALLANCE said the report of the Committee was not very pronounced or definite

It was as follows:-

"That the Committee are of opinion that, it the complex questions of Native title raised by the petition are to be inquired into exhaustively, it must be done by a different tribunatively, it must be done by a different tribunative in a Select Parliamentary Committee, whose time is manifestly far too limited for such a purpose. The Committee are not prepared to express an opinion as to whether such an inquiry should be held or not, but recommend that it should receive the attention of the Government."

The matter had received the attention of Governments since 1878; but the claims contained in the petition were of a very extraordinary character, a large amount of property being claimed. The Government had not come to a decision, and he did not think the Government would see their way to take any steps in the matter.

#### MINES ACT.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Minister of Mines, Whether the Government will take the necessary steps to call a conference of person cleeted by the gold-miners in the differen mining districts, for the purpose of considering and recommending what amendments are required to be made in "The Mines Act, 1877," and the rules and regulations made thereunder? He put the question for this reason: that he found that the Mines Act now in operation was drafted in accordance with the recommendations of a conference held in Wel-The Ac lington of the different Wardens. had been in force since 1877, and it was found nearly every session that gold-fields members were attempting to amend the Act, or complaining of various clauses in the Act, or of the rules and regulations made under it; and he wished to ascertain whether the Government would take the course he suggested, in order to find out how the Act might be made more

workable. The persons engaged in working under the Act might be presumed to be most capable of suggesting amendments that would make the Act workable.

Mr. BALLANCE, in reply, said the Government did not see what was to be gained by convening such a conference as was suggested by the honourable gentleman. It appeared to him that the best conference possible was that of the representatives of mining constituencies in that House. They were the elected representatives of the miners, and were best qualified to judge as to what were the wants and interests of the miners. Various amendments of the law were suggested from time to time, and the Gold Fields Committee would be the best body to consider the various proposals; and he was certain that, if that Committee would devote its attention to the matter and make recommendations to the House, the law might be put in a much more satisfactory condition.

# THE QUEEN V. MALONEY AND HUGHES.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Minister of Justice, Whether the Crown Prosecutor entered a nolle prosequi, at the last sitting of the Supreme Court at Hokitika, in the case of The Queen v. Maloney and Hughes, charged with arson, under instructions received from the Department of Justice; and, if so, will he state what those instructions were?

Mr. TOLE replied that the late Attorney-General, apparently after the fullest consideration, authorized the Crown Prosecutor at Hokitika to enter a nolle prosequi in this case. The instructions were dated the 11th August in this

#### E. ROLLERSON AND OTHERS.

Mr. CADMAN asked the Minister of Mines, If he will give effect to the recommendation of the Gold Fields Committee on the petition of Elijah Rollerson and other residents of Block 27, Thames? The Committee had found that they could not go fully into the merits of the case without incurring considerable expense in procuring witnesses from the Thames, and they therefore recommended that the Government should instruct the Warden there to take evidence and furnish a report. He would like to know if the Government would give the instructions necessary for carrying out this recommendation.

Mr. BALLANCE said he found, on inquiry, that it would cost £9,000 to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee, and therefore he quite agreed that further information was necessary before anything was done. The Government would take steps to acquire further information from the Warden.

#### W. DOCHERTY.

Mr. BRADSHAIGH-BRADSHAW asked the Minister of Mines, If he will give effect to the recommendation of the Gold Fields Committee on the petition of William Docherty, a prospector on the west coast of the Middle Island. who asks for some assistance to enable him to open up tracks to the lodes of ore discovered by him, so as to reduce the cost of carrying mining

materials and provisions?

Mr. BALLANCE replied that he found that Mr. Docherty had already received a sum of £130 as assistance towards prospecting. The Government, however, recognized the great exertions made by him, and, as he seemed to be a thoroughly trustworthy person, they were prepared to assist him further to the extent of £1 for £1 up to £150.

#### ACHERON COAL.

Mr. McMILLAN asked the Government, Whether they are aware of the existence of large coal-seams of anthracite coal of superior steaming qualities in the valley of the Acheron River; and whether they will, owing to the demand for such coal, offer facilities, by railway communication, for the development of these coal mines? Dr. Hector, in his geological report of 1870-71, stated that in that district there were three distinct coal-seams, the thickest being one of 4ft., and added that this coal was remarkable from its being converted into a true anthracite. He (Mr. McMillan) understood that other seams had been discovered since that report was made. The coal was on the line of the East and West Coast Railway viâ Lake Lyndon and Arthur's Pass.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said there was no doubt that the coal found in Acheron Valley was of the very highest and best quality of anthracite coal yet discovered in New Zealand; but, from the information at the disposal of the department, Dr. Hector stated that, as far as at present known, the deposit was not a very extensive one. When the district was further prospected other discoveries might be made; but it was necessary to know that before railway communication could be extended to the district.

LAKES DISTRICT COURT.

Mr. FERGUS asked the Minister of Justice, -(1.) What amount has been saved through the recent changes in clerks of Court in Lakes District? (2.) Whether he will cause War-dens' and Resident Magistrates' Courts to be held in that district more frequently than at present? The first part of the question spoke for itself; but, as to the second part, he might explain that it referred to a grievance which had existed for some years, the Wardens in the interior of Otago being almost, or he might say quite, unable to overtake the great amount of duty which fell upon them, and the result was that the business of the Court suffered considerably. The particular Warden to whom the question referred was now doing the work which used to be performed some four years ago by three men; and the same sort of thing was going on all through the interior of Otago. He hoped the Minister of Justice would take action in the direction suggested, so that justice might be administered better than it was at present in this respect.

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Mr. TOLE said that the answer to the first part of the question was that the saving had been £320 a year. With regard to the second part, he was not aware that any strong representation—so strong as the honourable gentle-man made out—had been made on the subject. He would, however, make inquiries into the subject, with the view of ascertaining the necessities of the case.

Mr. FERGUS might be allowed to explain that the matter had been brought under the notice of the late Minister of Justice in 1883, when the estimates were going through, and he said that some steps should be taken.

#### MANIOTOTO LAND.

Mr. M. J. S. MACKENZIE asked the Minister of Lands, If he is aware that the unselected balance of the reserves of land set apart for settlement in Maniototo District is unfit for agricultural purposes; and whether, being satisfied of the fact, he will take steps to cause suitable land, in sufficient quantity, to

be thrown open?
Mr. BALLANCE, in reply, said there was some doubt as to the fitness of the land for settlement; but in ten months' time the leases of other reserves would expire, and there would then be sufficient good agricultural land set aside. But he might say he understood there was at the present time a large quantity of land fit for settlement in that district which might be selected.

WESTPORT COLLIERY COMPANY.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Minister of Lands, Whether it is true that the Westport Colliery Company have recently purchased one hundred and fifty acres of the land leased to the company at Wallsend, Grey River; and, if so, when was it decided by the Government to allow the company to purchase the land, and upon what conditions; also, were the interests of the residents on the ground so purchased taken into consideration when granting to the company the privilege of purchase, and, if so, what were those condi-tions? He asked this question because he found that reports were current in the district that the Westport Colliery Company had recently purchased a block of, he thought, 150 acres, which was originally included in and formed part of their mineral lease of 1,000 acres. On this particular part of the block a township had sprung up, and he was anxious to know whether the Government, in making such a sale, had imposed any conditions to secure the protection of the interests of residents.

Mr. BALLANCE said it was true that the Westport Colliery Company had recently purchased 150 acres of the land leased by them. It was decided by the Government to allow the company to purchase the land on the 7th June, 1884. It was allowed on condition that the company was to sell or lease to the occupiers allotments on which houses had been built, and it was fixed that, in case of the lease of a section being required, the rent was not to

exceed £2 10s. per centum per annum on the capital value, and that there should be a right of renewal at the same rent. He had not before him information as to how much was paid by the company.

#### WAIKATO-THAMES RAILWAY.

Colonel FRASER asked the Minister for Public Works, What are the intentions of the Government with regard to that portion of the authorized Waikato to the Thames Railway between Kopu and Te Aroha?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the intention of the Government with regard to this railway was as stated in the Public Works Statement. The portion named in that Statement could, the Government considered, be completed during the currency of this year; and they would propose next year to further continue the line.

MARTON-MURIMOTU ROAD REPAIRS.

Mr. BRUCE asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether he will give directions to make such repairs on the Marton-Murimotu Road known as Murray's Track as will make it fit for traffic? This was one of the arterial roads of the colony, and was at present almost the only practicable outlet from the Murimotu Plains to the West Coast. He was advised by the County Council that it was in so bad a state that it was scarcely fit even for pack traffic. He might also point out, in connection with the route lately chosen for the main trunk railway, that any sum placed on the estimates for the repair of this road would make it avail-

able for haulage purposes to that line.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON thought he was right in saying that this was a line of road which came under the Roads and Bridges Construction Act. Under those circumstances application ought to be made for further sums of money under that Act, because it was essentially one of those roads for which that Act was passed; and, so long as the Act was in force, the road would come very well under it. A notice had been given that day with regard to a second road in this district, and it would not be competent at present to state which of those roads-if either, or both-would be required as a means of communication in the construction of the main trunk line.

Mr. BRUCE understood that this road had been taken over by the Government, who had since taken charge of the repairs. He believed the late Government had appropriated a sum of £1,000 for the purpose a couple of years ago, which had not yet been all expended.

#### TRICYCLES FOR POST AND TELE-GRAPH DELIVERY.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN asked the Government, Whether, with a view to saving time and expense in the public service, they will consider the advisableness of adopting the use of tricycles for the delivery of parcels, letters, and telegrams?

Sir J. VOGEL said a tricycle was tried in 1882, in Christchurch, by one of the lettercarriers, but the result was by no means satis-

factory. had to be traversed, and the fact that the carrier had to dismount so frequently and travel on foot before he could deliver his correspondence, were deemed serious objections to the general use of tricycles by letter-carriers in the Christchurch District. In fact, he had to carry the tricycle as often as the tricycle carried him. For remote districts with level roads the tricycles would be an advantage; but in very populous towns they would be useless, the carriers having to deliver letters at one or other of every two or three houses. They had not been tried for the delivery of telegrams. For the delivery of long-distance messages they might be used with advantage, but they would not answer for populous centres. The use of tricycles for delivery of long-distance messages might be given a trial.

Hawke's Bay-Central

# HAWKE'S BAY-CENTRAL RAILWAY CONNECTION.

Mr. ORMOND asked the Government, If they will take steps to obtain a report on the character of the country through which a railway would pass connecting Hawke's Bay with the Central Railway by way of inland Patea, and ascertain especially the capabilities of the country such a line would open for purposes of settlement; and whether arrangements can be made with the Native owners for the cession of land along the line; also, if the Government will have a survey and estimate of cost of such railway prepared? During the debate on the central railway the House very favourably viewed the claims put forth by the West Coast for connection with that line and Auckland, and he now put this question for the purpose of calling the attention of the Government to the very fine country through which any communication from the East Coast to the central line must pass. The district of inland Patea was one of the finest in the colony, and certainly the finest in the interior of the North Island, besides which the distance would not be great.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the Government were aware that a large tract of this country was very valuable land, and well worth while opening. The honourable gentleman would no doubt have noticed that, in the evidence given before the Committee on the North Island Trunk Railway, very much was said in favour of connecting this inland-Patea country with the main line by a branch railway. With regard to the question of whether arrangements could be made with the Native owners for a cession of the land along the line, he was not quite sure, but he thought that some of the land was included in the Bill which the Native Minister had now before the House; and no doubt, before any steps were taken with regard to the land there, information would be obtained as to how the land could be got from the Native owners. As to the construction of the line, he must give the same answer as he had given with regard to the line joining the West Coast with the main line—namely, that, as the construction of the main line was being

The many unformed streets which proceeded with, surveys would be made of all parts of the country through which it might be ad to dismount so frequently and foot before he could deliver his cor-

#### NORTH ISLAND TRUNK RAILWAY.

Dr. NEWMAN asked the Minister for Public Works, If the Government will at once proceed with the construction of the North Island Main Trunk Railway, beginning at Marton as well as at Te Awamutu?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that the Government had hardly considered this question yet, and could not do so until the railway had

been sanctioned by Parliament.

#### TELEGRAPH EMPLOYÉS.

Sir G. GREY asked the Postmaster-General, Is it the rule in the Telegraph Department that no claim for overtime is entertained unless the claimant has worked one hour and a half in excess of eight hours' duty?

Sir J. VOGEL replied that it was not now the rule to refuse to recognize claims for overtime unless the claimant had worked one hour and a half in excess of the eight hours' duty. At the principal telegraph offices a fortnight's duty was taken as the basis on which a calculation was made as to the overtime any telegraphist might be entitled to, and, should the total attendance be greater than an average of eight hours a day, overtime was paid on the excess.

#### RAILWAY EMPLOYÉS' BACK PAY.

Sir G. GREY asked the Minister for Public Works,—(1.) Did the employés of the locomotive branch, Auckland section of railways, receive their back pay, and, if so, upon what date, in accordance with the circular of Superintending Engineer F. B. Passmore, No. 6–74, 18th day of September, 1874? (2.) Did the terms of such circular include officials connected with the traffic department at Auckland, and whether these public servants were similarly treated? (3.) Whether the Minister for Public Works will take the matter of these traffic railway employés into consideration, and authorize their being dealt with in the same manner as those employed in the locomotive department?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON would read the reply which the department had sent to the question, and which set forth the facts of the case very fully:—

"At the period of reorganization of the Railway Department in 1880-81 it was found that different rates of pay and regulations prevailed in different parts of the colony, and that no uniform treatment had been followed. After considering the subject, the Government determined to adopt a uniform system of pay and promotion throughout the colony on the railways, and this was introduced in May, 1881. The Government would not entertain applications for exceptional treatment of any section of the employés, nor for the refund of any alleged arrears on account of non-promotion as the subject of increases and promotion was considered in dealing with the estimates for

1879-80, and such increases were allowed as were then thought proper. The employés in the locomotive branch, Auckland, have since repeatedly claimed sums they alleged were due. They were paid their claims in Septem-ber, 1883. The circular alluded to included in the lists rates of pay for traffic employés. The Government has received petitions from the Auckland traffic employes for alleged arrears of pay, and return of the 10-per-cent. reduction imposed on all Government employés during 1879-80, but has declined to accede to them. It has been held that the Auckland traffic employés are not entitled to claim promo-tion or increased pay any more than any other of the railway employés or Civil servants, unless such increased rates of pay and promotion were allowed by the Government of the day, which was not the case. The circular in question was an instruction from the Minister to his officer in 1874, but had been long out of use."

NATIVE LANDS SETTLEMENT BILL. On the motion of Mr. PERE, it was ordered, That Wahanui be heard at the bar of this House prior to the second reading of the Native Lands Settlement Bill.

# POPULATION, ETC., OF PROVINCIAL DISTRICTS.

On the motion of Mr. SEDDON, it was ordered, That a return be laid before this House showing the population in the Nelson, Wellington, Canterbury, Auckland, Otago, and Westland Provincial Districts; also the im-ports and exports of the said districts.

#### WAIROA COUNTY REVENUE AND EX-PENDITURE.

On the motion of Mr. LOCKE, it was ordered, That there be laid upon the table a return of the amount of revenue derived from the Wairoa County by taxation, sale of land, or other sources during the past five years, and the amount expended in the same locality during the same period.

#### NEW ZEALAND INTERNATIONAL SOUTH SEA TRADING COMPANY BILL.

Sir J. VOGEL.—Sir, in moving the second reading of this Bill, I will endeavour to be as concise as I possibly can. The subject is more or less well known to honourable members, but I trust they will be able to come to its consideration without any foregone conclusion against the proposed measure. So long ago as 1874 there was a considerable amount of correspondence upon the subject of constituting a chartered company, and subsequently the proposal took the form of incorporating a company by Act of the New Zealand Parliament. The proposal fell through for reasons not necessary for me to dwell upon now; but I may say that the proposal had the support of many persons of high authority, both in this colony and in the Mother-country. In 1880 the attention of the German Government was directed to the subject, and Prince Bismarck undertook to obtain a guarantee for a company which was proposed to be established under very wide powers. I was Agent-General at the time, and, in sending out a translation of the prospectus of the proposed company, I used the following words:-

"The primary object of the company is to take over the assets of the company formed by Messrs. Godeffroi. But, inasmuch as its capital is to be largely in excess of what is sufficient for that purpose, with an almost indefinite power of increase, its objects are presumably of a much more ambitious description than those of the company it supersedes. Its title is a very wide one—'The German Maritime Trading Company;' and its object is stated to be 'trans-atlantic trade, the purchase and working of factories, mills, and plantations, particularly in the South Sea Islands.' Prince Bismarck considers the company to have an importance of so high a national character that he has undertaken to procure for it a guaranteed minimum rate of dividend to the shareholders."

This proposal of Prince Bismarck's fell through, the German Parliament not agreeing to give the amount of guarantee that he proposed. Nevertheless the company was formed, and, in one shape or another, has carried out large transactions in the Pacific Islands. know now that within the last year or two those South Sea Islands have become objects of ambition, not to say of cupidity, to some of the principal nations of the world. In fact, history is being made so fast in regard to them that it is impossible to say now from day to day what is the actual position. This we know: that, after a long series of negotiations, the English Government has consented to assume a protectorate over the south-eastern portion of New Guinea; but, as far as we know, with regard to other islands the Imperial authorities have not shown much willingness to carry out the wishes of the other colonies and the wishes of New Zealand expressed last year with regard to annexation and protection. Now, it seems to me that it is of great importance to us to consider that, while those islands are being, so to say, sought after by some of the principal nations of the world, such as France, Germany, and, if the newspapers are to be trusted, Austria, we at whose very feet they lie are neglectful of them. I find that, as far as commerce is concerned, whilst, for the five years ending with 1882, our united exports and imports to the islands amounted to only £683,000, the trade of New South Wales was no less than £3,274,000. I have referred to the action of the Australian Governments, and honourable members know that that will come on for discussion under a series of resolutions, of which my colleague has given notice. Honourable members are aware, also, that the attention of Australia has been very largely, I might almost say exclusively, directed, during many months past, to the subject; but the result cannot be said to be one of a satisfactory nature to New Zealand; for we may at least say this: that the annexation of a portion of New Guinea has a minimum amount of interest and importance to us in the Colony of New

Mr. E. Richardson

Zealand. Although, as a Government, we feel it right to come down and propose that we should share in the contribution, so that we should not be outside of the Australian con-cert, yet it cannot be ignored for one moment that the annexation of New Guinea is of the least importance to us as compared with the annexation of other islands with which we can do a trade. It is somewhat remarkable that a measure which was passed last year, and to which the present Government attribute the largest amount of importance—the Annexation and Confederation Act—does not seem to have been laid before the Conference or Convention in Sydney, or to have been insisted upon, so to speak, by the New Zealand Government as one of the startingpoints of the Conference. I may be wrong, and, if I am, perhaps the honourable member for Egmont will correct me, but I cannot even see that that Act was set forth before the Conference, or that any action was taken in reference to it. Now, it appears to me that that Act, although it was reserved for the pleasure of Her Majesty - and I suppose it was necessary that such a course should be taken-was one of the largest amount of importance to the colony, and one which, so to speak, should have bound the Government of New Zealand, at any rate as the starting-point for action with the other Australian Colonies. I do not hold that that Act is inconsistent with the interests of the other colonies, or with the action taken by the other colonies. Let us bear in mind this: that the first starting-point of the interest which has been attached to the South Sea Islands by the Australian Colonies had its origin in an attempt on the part of Queensland to annex New Guinea. I understand that what the Australian Colonies ask is this: that the islands should be brought under the dominion of a settled and stable Government; and it would be quite as much in conformity with their wishes that they should be confederated with or annexed to a stable Government in New Zealand as that they should be endowed with a much less civilized form of government in the shape of a protectorate. I do not hold that the Australian Colonies would have the right, nor do I believe they would have the inclination, to consider that Act as in opposition to their interests: on the contrary, I think it might have been that they would have indorsed the Act, and would have endeavoured to obtain for it the assent of Her Majesty's Government. I may say that such is the importance we have attached to the Act in question that we have, by telegraph, instructed the Agent-General to press for its allowance by Her Majesty's Government, and also to en-deavour, if there is, as is reported—as honour-able members have seen in the newspapers, and as has been more or less confirmed by quasiofficial accounts - a settlement being made between the various Powers as to the islands of the Pacific, to urge the claims of New Zealand to a share of control. We have thought it right to press upon the notice of the Agent-

General the powers given to the colony by the Act in question, and to state that it would not be distasteful to this colony to have the option of annexing the Samoan Group. Now, Sir, as regards the question which more immediately concerns this Bill, we think this: that the flag in these Pacific Islands has mostly in the past—and, more or less, will do so in the future—followed the trade. The action which France and Germany are taking is action which has not been commenced with the idea of instigating and initiating trade, but action which has followed upon trade and commercial relations which have grown up; and we cannot help thinking that, unless we have, so to speak, power placed in our hands to deal with the commercial aspect of the question, there is not much probability of the government portion of the question coming in the way of this colony. As far as appearances are now concerned, it would seem that the whole trade of these islands is not coming towards New Zealand, but is being artificially diverted from it. As regards the importance of these islands, I could not pay any more eloquent tribute to their probable influence on the future of the colony than by reading a passage in a speech delivered last year by the honourable member for Auckland East (Sir George Grey). Sir, that passage is so suggestive that, although it may be fresh in the minds of a great many honourable members, I shall take leave to read it, to show how large and far-seeing, I may say, is this question of the future action which may result from a more intimate alliance between New Zealand and the Pacific

Islands. Sir George Grey last year said,—
"I think that New Zealand has been ordained by Nature virtually to be the future, Queen of the Pacific. Nothing can rob her of this position except misconduct on her own part — gross failure in the duties Providence has placed before her as those she ought to perform. If honourable gentlemen will reflect, they will see that these are great islands, capable of carrying probably upwards of thirty millions of European inhabitants, situated in a very large ocean, separated by such vast tracts of sea from other countries that it seems almost impossible that an army of any amount, sufficient to do anything to hurt this colony, should be able to be despatched against it. Then, within our shores are strongholds of the most extraordinary kind, the use of which the Natives have often shown us in the past, which would render it almost impossible for an army to penetrate into and hold this country for any length of time. New Zealand, therefore, I look upon as absolutely unconquerable. I be-lieve that centuries will clapse before an army would be able to obtain a footing upon the shores of this country. That being the case, I believe we are continually advancing to a state which I have always held we should advance to—the virtual government of the Pacific. We should recollect that it is necessary for us to provide outlets for our future population. Unless you give an outlet and a sphere of activity to your young men of every rank of

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life, you will have a nation of inert and unenterprising people. I believe that under a system of federation each of these islands may become an appanage and an outlet for the future population of New Zealand. And I think, if we had amongst us Legislatures such forms of self-government as we once had, in fact—schools in which statesmen could be raised, schools in every part of New Zealand, we might then send our governors and legis-lators to all the distant islands of the Pacific, to unite them by one common system of education, by one common form of government, by one class of habits, and, I think, found as great an empire as the world has ever seen, giving employment to every class of our population—our seamen, our merchants, our farmers; and from our young men we could send lawyers, legislators, physicians, governors, under whatever name they may be called, to each of those countries. I believe you would thus awaken the life of a nation here, and put it in the fairest position possible to attain success. But I think your only chance to do that is by proceeding by some cautious method such as I have recommended. Enter upon no place the inhabitants of which do not call upon you. Come as friends, and they will receive you with welcome and contentment. Do everything to the utmost of your power to benefit them in every possible way; and thus by degrees, as your means increase, your power of doing good augments. Spread your dominion from island to island, from place to place. But do not hurriedly and unwisely attempt to acquire or to annex that which you cannot hold, which you cannot benefit, which will only involve you in difficulties, and which will lead you to regret having entered upon a course upon which you ought never to have embarked."

That is an eloquent tribute to the possibilities in connection with these islands, and I do not think it would be possible to exaggerate the importance which these islands may exercise upon the future. If we are true to the physical features of this country, the people of New Zealand should in the future be a great maritime race, and nothing can be more likely to encourage maritime pursuits of a peaceful character than the enlargement and extension of our trade in the direction of the countless islands of the Pacific, of which we at present know comparatively very little beyond their large resources. I am of opinion that it is useless for us to sit down — and there, so far, I do not agree with the honourable gentleman from whom I have quoted—and expect this will come our way unless we make some efforts in that direction. Unless we can enlarge our operations and make a great trade with the Pacific Islands we cannot, in my opinion, hope to obtain that friendship with them which must be the precursor of more intimate governmental relations. If the islands to which I have referred and New Zealand were in intimate connection, if from an intimate com-mercial connection there sprang a still more intimate connection of government, we should find that those islands would be the means of

consuming largely the products of New Zesland, and, in return, we should receive from the islands, for useful and manufacturing purposes, a vast amount of their productions, which we cannot produce in New Zealand. It open to us. We have passed it by; and I am not sanguine, even if we pass this measure, that it will have anything like the amount of influence I could wish it to have. Even now, while we are talking, and during the days this measure has been on the Order Paper, we know that negotiations are, and have been, going on in relation to a large number of the islands, which may have a very great effect upon their future. Still, I cannot help thinking that, if we make a provision by which we may acquire a commercial interest in the islands, we may go a long way towards reconciling foreign countries to the use of New Zealand as a means of introducing to them a stable form of government. Take, for example, Germany. We have the declaration of Prince Bismarck that Germany does not seek extended rule; but that he has resolved that, wherever German interests are concerned, the protection of the German Government shall be afforded. If this measure is passed, probably we should acquire large German interests, especially in the Samoan Group, not as apart from the Germans, but we should enlist the aid of the Germans, and make it part of the enterprise that the trade should be worked from New Zealand as the head centre, and we should then be in a position to unite together English and German interests; and, that once achieved, there would be no further danger of serious disputes in the Southern Seas. Were England and Germany in accord, there is no probability of any influence being brought which could overmaster them. But the Bill does not stop with Germany. It proposes to allow other nations also to join in the conexpress the opinion that, if we neglect the opportunity now, we shall regret it, not once only, but always. If this Bill is not carried, the Government will feel equally proud that they have afforded to the Legislature an oppor-tunity of passing it; and, whilst they will regret that decision of the House, they will feel that the day will come when honourable members will regret the rejection much more than the Government can possibly ever regret the introduction of the Bill. As re-gards the advantage to New Zealand generally, it is impossible that a measure of this kind, which may open the means of supplying products and of receiving the productions of so many countries, can have an influence over only one part of New Zealand. But, of course, as one is always obliged to refer to a local question, the more immediate and largest advantage would no doubt be felt by the city which would have to be the head-quarters of the company—Auckland. It would be impossible to recommend that the company should have other head-quarters than Auckland. mention that, because it is as well there should be no misapprehension on this point, as these

questions, I am sorry to say, are so often looked upon from a local point of view. Now, as regards the nature of the Bill, the Government of New Zealand is asked by this measure, or rather the Legislature is asked, to sanction a very small guarantee, not exceeding £10,000 a year, and that guarantee is to be repaid out of half the excess of profits over 7 per cent. I think it is not in the nature of things that the colony will be called upon to pay the guarantee for any considerable period, if at all: and it seems to me also that, if the company is managed with common prudence, it must be certain that the Government will be recouped whatever, if anything, it shall have paid on account of the guarantee. The objects of the company are set forth in the Bill:—

"(a.) To develop the trade and producing resources of the islands in the Pacific Ocean, to facilitate the interchange of products and merchandise between the said islands and other countries, and to establish factories for the utilization of the products of the said

islands ;

"(b.) To promote the civilization, education, and industrial employment of the islanders, and thereby discourage the labour traffic among the said islands;

"(c.) Generally to do and perform all such acts, matters, and things as the company may deem incidental or otherwise conducive to the attainment of any of the above objects."

The Government believe that the company will be the means of inducing the natives in the various islands to work and labour and produce, and supersede that painful traffic in human flesh which is now a disgrace to the islands of the Southern Seas, and the repression of which has cost such vast sums of money to the Imperial Government. It is not the case that we are asking anything in the shape of a monopoly. The field is so vast, it seems to me, that it is impossible for one company, with the proposed capital, to overtake it all. The company would be the means of carrying on a traffic with the islanders - by inducing them to cultivate their plantations, and by helping and enabling industries and occupations to be carried on within the islands by others of the European race. The machinery of the company is simple. The Governor is to appoint not less than twenty-five persons who will form the electoral body which is to elect the first or provisional directors. Provision is made for the appointment of permanent directors, and for the appointment of the chairman of the company. It will be an integral part of the constitution of the company that its head-quarters will be in New Zealand. It will have the means of co-operation with other countries. If it does not secure that co-operation, or if it secures only a part of it, the object of the company can still be carried out. There is a clause which enables the company to issue promissory notes for circulation in the Pacific Islands. That is a clause which will give facilities to the company, and will also afford facilities to the South Sea Islands, and it is provided that the notes shall

not exceed the "uncalled" capital of the company. I will say, in reference to this measure, that the sacrifice the colony is asked to make is so small, and the objects which it is proposed to attain are so large, that it will be a matter for very great regret if we do not pass the Bill. I am quite aware that it is easy to indulge in large aspirations with regard to annexation and confederation; but, if you have not the means available—if you remain supine while you see the trade being literally carried past the shores of the colony—how can you expect that you will be able to command it when it has been taken away from you? There will not be the means, or the power, or the prestige which this company will possess, to bring the trade to New Zea-land. Even if this is to be looked upon only as an experiment, it is one that will entail so little cost, so little sacrifice to the country, that I hope honourable members will be found willing to adopt it. I am not speaking without book when I say that very high authorities, persons who have had ample means of judging of what has taken place during the last twelve years in Polynesia, have expressed the opinion that, if the proposals brought forward in 1874 had had effect given to them, the great difficulties that have since overtaken the Polynesian question would have been avoided, while it is nearly certain that the company which it was then proposed to form would have been a success by this time. It is not too late to go into the matter now, but if it is passed over this session it will, I fear, behopeless to think of anything of the kind. we take it up now, I do not despair of our being able to lay a reasonable claim to a large share. of the trade of these islands. The formation of such a company as this, I need scarcely point out to honourable members, is not a novel one. We know what other trading companies have done. We know that some of the largest governmental operations have been effected by trading companies. I would point not only to the East India Company. As honourable members are aware, there are trading companies between the Netherlands and Java. There is the case of the Borneo Company; and the case of an enormous company, in which the King of the Belgians is interested, for settling the interior of South Africa. And there are suggestions which have been thrown out for the establishment by different nations of companies, not only in connection with these islands, but in connection with other colonizing operations in various portions of the earth. There is the Hudson Bay Company, which no doubt has done a great deal of good and which has been the precursor of the great. settlement that has taken place in Manitoba. We are not trying an experiment which has not previous experience to recommend it. We are merely entering, with very small risk, upon a course which, I take leave to say, if prudently managed—if the company is prudently managed—must result in vast good to the colony. The real danger—the real risk to be run—is the risk of not being able to obtain

good management. When I consider with how much care, prudence, and skill the large institutions in the colony have been managed, I cannot but think that we shall find in New Zealand persons who will be able to give the necessary amount of attention, diligence, and judgment to carry this undertaking to a successful issue. I feel that it is unnecessary for me to say more. The results in view are so large that I can only say to honourable members, if they throw out this Bill, I feel assured they will, in the future, feel the keenest regret that they have not allowed it to pass. As far as the Government are concerned, they bring it before the House with their strongest and most earnest recommendation, feeling, as I have said, assured that, if it fail to command the attention of the House, it will nevertheless continue to be a source of satisfaction to them to have been the proposers of a measure of such vast utility. I beg leave to move the second

reading of the Bill.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I feel sure that every member of the House has listened with great interest to the speech which we have just heard from the Colonial Treasurer. speech which I think most of us have looked forward to with a good deal of curiosity, be-cause we have been anxious to know how the honourable gentleman would deal with a subject which is peculiarly his own, and with which his name has been intimately connected in the past. But I am bound to say that, now I have heard all the Treasurer has to say in support of this Bill, I am somewhat disappointed: in fact, what I feel is that the honourable gentleman has talked about certain things cognate to this subject rather than about the subject itself. He has really made a speech which has more bearing on the subject of annexation and confederation. He has not given to this House sufficient reasons why we should launch upon a course which is altogether novel as an act of legislation in this colony, and which is undoubtedly fraught with very many difficulties. I suppose there is no subject in the whole world about which it is easier to make a florid speech, or an attractive speech, than about the islands of the Pacific. If ever there was a subject to which the old maxim, "Omne ignotum pro magnifico," applies, it is this one, for the members of this House know really nothing about these islands, and whatever is unknown to them appears magnificent. honourable gentleman, with all his enthusiasm and earnestness, dwelt upon the vast advantages which are to be gained by this colony by the extension of its imperium over the islands of the Pacific. We could not but follow him with deep interest, and we could not but be to a certain extent affected by his oratory upon the subject. At the same time, I think the House, in approaching this measure, should look upon it as a grave act of legislation, as a practical piece of business. Honourable mem-bers should not allow themselves to be carried away merely by the brilliancy of the colours in which the honourable member depicts regions which to them are personally unknown. We plored, and as a matter which calls for the

have not heard one word from the honourable member to show us that this scheme of his is calculated to lead to success. He has not told us what the company is going to do, or how it is to be a profitable concern. All he told us was that if the scheme of 1874 had been adopted it would have been a vast success. Well, that is merely an expression of opinion on his part. It might have been exactly the reverse—it might have proved a failure, and might have brought ridicule and discredit upon the colony. One opinion is almost as weighty as the other upon that subject. And when he tells us that now, if we do not at this moment, this very day, pass this Bill and seize the great wealth which is lying before us in those islands, we shall lose the opportunity for ever, I think he is making statements which are scarcely sup-ported by arguments or facts. I cannot help thinking that the honourable gentleman felt that he had not carried the judgment of the House with him when he brought in this Bill; because he began his speech by saying that he hoped we should approach this subject without any foregone conclusion. What made him say that, I think, was that he regarded this as a Bill which would not necessarily commend itself to the good judgment of the House and the country. He tolls us in very general terms that there is a trade springing up with these vast islands at the present moment, and that we must seize this opportunity, or lose it for ever. Here, again, the honourable gentleman makes a statement which I cannot help thinking is very vague, and one which he by no means substantiates. I do not consider that history is being made at so great a rate in the islands as people might suppose by the telegrams and paragraphs we see in the newspapers. I have been reading very carefully all the information available upon the subject, and the conclusion I am led to is this: that history is not making itself very fast in the islands, but that in fact the trade of the islands is being developed very quietly indeed, in the ordinary way, and that what I may call the theatrical demonstrations that are made about it have very little substance in them. What really is substantial is the extension of the trade with the colonies of New South Wales and New Zealand. I do not think the honourable gentleman is quite right in saying that New South Wales is outstripping us very much in the race. That, of course, is a matter of opinion. I saw in Sir Arthur Gordon's report upon the Pacific Islands a very exhaustive and a very able statement, in which he says that New Zealand is outstripping New South Walcs. He says the number of our vessels trading there is rapidly increasing—increasing more rapidly than desirable from his point of view. He admits that the New South Wales trade is also rapidly increasing. I would draw attention to this curious fact: that Sir Arthur Gordon, in stating that New South Wales and New Zesland are increasing rapidly their trade with the South Pacific, mentions it not as a subject for congratulation, but as a subject to be de-

Sir J. Vogel



very grave attention of the Imperial authori-It is most interesting to find that statement made by the most trusted official of the Empire in such matters, one who is at this moment the most consulted official of any with regard to this question - for I see that the Imperial Government have adopted almost all of Sir Arthur Gordon's recommendations and proposals with regard to the protectorate over New Guinea and the South Sea Islands. That officer does not look upon it at all as a good thing, or as a thing to be desired, that we should increase our influence in those islands, and he warns the Imperial Government that, unless steps be taken to put a stop to it, New Zealand will pretty soon take possession of those islands commercially, if not politically; and that he seems to regard as a thing greatly to be deplored. I need hardly mention to this House that Sir Arthur Gordon looks at the matter simply from the point of view of the natives of the islands and the officials who may be destined to rule them, and he thinks it would be a very bad thing for the natives if traders from New Zealand were to gain supremacy over them. He looks at the matter simply from that point of view, and cannot see that any benefit will result to the islands from the increase of New Zealand trade in the Pacific. Now, the Colonial Treasurer seems to me to be under some misunderstanding of what is being done by the Imperial Government at this moment. He says it is a matter of no importance to New Zealand that New Guinea should be annexed by the Empire, because it is so distant from New Zealand, and we are not likely to have any dealings with New Guinea. But what he overlooks is this: that the protectorate exists over the whole of the islands in the South Pacific.

Mr. STOUT .- No.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I say Yes.

Mr. STOUT.—Oh, no. Mr. WAKEFIELD.—Then Sir Arthur Gordon knows nothing about it. Of course, if the Premier knows ever so much more about it than Sir Arthur Gordon, I must give in; but Sir Arthur Gordon's writings are my authority.

Mr. STOUT.—Is the honourable member referring to the protectorate recently set up, or

to the general protectorate?

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—Perhaps I did not make myself quite clear. I say that the protectorate by Great Britain extends over the whole of the South Pacific. In fact, its limits are undefined in the Order in Council, and Sir Arthur Gordon does not even venture to recommend what its limits should be. He seems to think that it should be left open to any islands which may at any future time come in under the British protectorate. It therefore applies to the whole of the South Pacific. As to this protectorate over the south-eastern shore of New Guinea, I take it that the protectorate to be established there is to be the centre of British rule in the Pacific.

Mr. STOUT .- No.

Mr. WAKEFIELD. — Yes, I think it is. am not speaking without having carefully read

all the documents, and there I find it practically stated that the central authority of the British protectorate in the South Seas is to vest in an officer who will be resident in New Guinea. That is to be his position, and the Imperial Government places all the islands in the South Pacific with which we can deal under the agis of Imperial rule, and would no doubt offer very strong objections to any interference with the islands on the part of this or any other company. That seems to be a point which the Colonial Treasurer has not considered sufficiently — that there will undoubtedly be serious objection to this proposal by the Imperial officers, of whom Sir Arthur Gordon may be accepted as a type. The Colonial Treasurer quoted a speech made by the honourable member for Auckland East in 1883; and even hearing it read revived the spirits of the House. I could not help being carried away, and I believe other mem-bers of the House were also carried away, by the eloquence and the lofty-mindedness of that speech. I was not in the House at the time when the speech was delivered, but when I read it I was much struck by it; and, when the Colonial Treasurer just now read it to us with a ferrour which imparted warmth to the words, we could not help being influenced by the ring of true patriotism which characterized it. But, when the honourable gentleman finished reading that speech, and came to speak of his own scheme, I could not help remarking the contrast that was presented to us between the patriotism and the high-mindedness of the speech of the honourable member for Auckland East and the sordid proposals contained in this Bill which is now before us. There was such a distinct difference between the two that I could not help thinking the honourable gentleman was spoiling his own case — was, in fact, absolutely destroying his own case — when he presented to this House so startling a contrast as there was between the speech of the honourable member for Auckland East and the Bill which he himself brought down. The honourable gentleman, when he came to explain his own Bill, at once began to touch on what I think was dangerous ground. Although, with great adroitness, he kept out of sight to a great extent the main objections to this Bill, at the same time he could not discuss the measure without drawing attention to some of them. The honourable gentleman tells us that the German interests in the Pacific are very great, and that they are jealously guarded by the German Government; but that, if the company is started, New Zealand will practically acquire these German interests, and that the Germans, looking at their interests merely from a commercial point of view and not at all from a political point of view, will be willing that New Zealand shall have the political power if it will take over the commercial interests, which we should be ready to do, as our political interests are bound up with the future of the Pacific Ocean. Well, that gives one a curious idea of the Imperial principles that influence Prince Bismarck; but **158** 

what I would point out is this: that we have | nothing to do with this question. What we have do with is purely the commercial question, and, looking at the matter from this point of view, I would remark that we have no guarantee that we should not be making a very bad bargain indeed if we were to buy out the German interests in the Pacific. has been the result of German trading there? We know very well that the great house of Godeffroi failed most disastrously—that it was a complete smash, after years and years of work, during which branches of the house had been spread over the principal islands of the Samoan Group; and that the German Government used every means to induce Parliament to give aid to a company which should take up the business of this firm, but that Parliament refused. With that information before us, the honourable gentleman tells us that one object of his proposals is that we shall buy out German interests. It seems to me that it is very much like taking over a bankrupt concern. I do not think that that reference was very strongly in favour of the Bill; but, at all events, the honourable gentleman might have given us some information as to the present condition of the German trading-stations in the islands, for some years have elapsed since the particular house which I have mentioned failed. honourable gentleman tells us that what he practically asks in the Bill is to give some small encouragement to a company, that the capital of the company will be only a million, and that the guarantee is to be limited to a certain sum -£10,000 a year. But I would point out this: that, once the House launches into a speculation of this sort, we cannot tell how far we may be carried. The honourable gentleman tells us that the company will only have a million invested, and that the guarantee will be but £10,000 a year; but, suppose it is found, after the scheme has been in operation for a time, that the company must come to utter failure unless another million is raised and another £10,000 is guaranteed, how can we back out of the transaction, or how could we refuse to go in a little further? We know well enough that, once into such a scheme, we may not be able to avoid making ourselves responsible for many millions, when the guarantee would become a serious thing. If it were simply a commercial transaction, in which a certain sum is guaranteed, as when a private person guarantees an overdraft for a friend or a trader, then perhaps the objections would not be so great: but every one knows that the colony is not like a private person, and that, if we enter into such a transaction as this, the honour of the colony will be to a certain extent pledged to see it through; that there can be no stopping or going back, but that, cost what it may, we are bound to go on, until the catastrophe arrives, and we are compelled to get out of it altogether. Honourable gentlemen should not allow themselves for one moment to be carried away with the idea that we are only incurring a small liability. The liability mentioned is simply

the starting-point; no one can tell to what amount it may extend in a short time. There are many points in the Bill which ought to have been explained, but of which we have had no explanation whatever. I must admit, however, that it is eminently characteristic of the honourable gentleman. There is an enthusiasm about it that is perfectly astonishing. The honourable gentleman seems to leap over all difficulties, and even to assume facts that do not exist. In the preamble, for instance, we find it stated,—

"Whereas the formation of a company in New Zealand to develop the commerce of the said islands and to further the trade between them and New Zealand has been proposed: And whereas it is desirable that certain powers should be granted to the said company, to enable it successfully to carry on its operations, . . . . "

Now, the company is only proposed, and yet these great powers are to be given to it. The honourable gentleman certainly has not told us that any company is in existence, although I gather from the 3rd clause that there is already some sort of organization in existence, because the 3rd clause reads, "Such and so many persons as have already become or at any time or times hereafter may become proprietors of shares shall be incorporated in a company." I have never heard of any company, and do not know what this expression Certainly the honourable has reference to. gentleman should have told us whether there was any company or any organization in exist-ence, or whether the body referred to in this clause is a mere figment. Then, the honourable gentleman tells us that he has no desire to give this company any monopoly. It is not said in so many words that the company shall have a monopoly; but does it not stand to reason that a company which is allowed by law to raise a capital of a million, to issue a million's worth of paper money, and to have £10,000 a year guaranteed to it—a dividend of 5 per cent.—by Parliament, must practically have a monopoly? Is it to be supposed for a moment that any other private company could compete with them? The Bill does not set out that the company is to have a monopoly; but practically, to all intents and purposes, it does establish a monopoly, because a company possessing such exceptional advantages could have no competition from any private company. Then he goes on to tell us that, although the company would not have a monopoly, it certainly would buy out some businesses. He does not say which or how many; and that, I say, is the weakest point in the whole Bill. The company would undoubtedly be employed by some people who wish to get rid of their businesses in the South Sea Islands to take over their concerns. I am told, by those who know the islands well and are thoroughly acquainted with the trade of the islands, that the company will not have the slightest difficulty in acquiring almost all the businesses in the islands on very reasonable terms—that is to say, very reasonable from the point of view

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of those who own the businesses. There are, I am told, businesses and factories on these islands which could have been acquired by private persons for a mere song for any length of time past, but which will be palmed off on this proposed company at prices far in advance of the prices for which they might have been acquired by private individuals. It seems that the company will not be able to help itself, for the reason that these trading companies already possess a monopoly, as it were, of the trade in particular islands; and, if our trading company is to get any footing in those islands, it will first have to buy these companies out. In that way its capital will be dissipated, and it will get very small consideration for it. In a word, this is a Bill that will open the door to a vast amount of jobbery in the way of purchasing businesses in the islands. That is one of the weakest points in the Bill. And, as the honourable gentleman very truly told us, there will be great difficulty in getting competent and trustworthy men to undertake the management of the concorn. He tells us, however, that there are already institutions so admirably managed in New Zealand that we need have no fear on that point, but he does not tell us whom, amongst these admirable managers, he is going to get to manage this company. We know the Bank of New Zealand is admirably managed, and we know how the Mutual Provident Society has been managed so that it has achieved an immense success; but is it the class of men who have managed those institutions who are to become the agents and factors of this company in the South Sea Islands? Certainly not. It stands to reason we should never get such a class of men as that to manage this concern. We must either have men who are already familiar with the trade of the islands—that is to say, men who are engaged as traders in the islands—a most dangerous class of men, I should say, for this company to take over. They are men who would not have the interest of the company at heart, but who would be up to all the tricks of the trade, and who would seek to make their own profits as their chief duty. Or, on the other hand, if the company does not choose these men, it will have to send men of good cha-macter from New Zealand, and, from the very fact of their having to be selected from New Zealand, they would have no experience in the trade of the islands, and would be fleeced and cheated in all directions. I must acknowledge that the honourable member had the candour to point out that that was a weak part of the proposal; but I do not think he went nearly far enough in that direction. He tells us that the trade is being carried away from the shores of the colony, and he says that, if we do not carry out this project this year, it will not be worth while doing so next year. But he does not show us that the trade is being carried from the colony. If I am in-formed aright, there is already a large trade being carried on in Auckland with these islands, and men of considerable capital are engaged

in it—men who thoroughly understand their business, and are quite capable of managing it without any assistance. Look at the sugarrefining business carried on in Auckland. What a large concern that is! Certainly the esta-blishment is in Fiji, and not in any island that comes under this Bill; but, still, a very important commencement has been made, and there can be no doubt that it will grow into an enormous business in time. That is what is being done in Auckland by private individuals without any assistance from the Government. They pay the duty on their sugar, and they carry on their business in a legitimate com-mercial way. Then, the winding-up part of the honourable gentleman's argument was very weak indeed. He said that this was a harmless experiment, at the worst. A harmless experiment! If it be an experiment, it cannot be harmless. If we go into this thing, and it succeeds at first and grows into large dimensions, and then fails, it will not be by any means harmless. It will be an experiment which will cost the colony a vast amount of money, and will bring disgrace on this Legislature. We shall certainly be blamed for rushing into a scheme altogether outside legitimate politics without sufficient data to go upon, and with no certainty whatever that it will be a success. I hope the House will not regard it as a harmless experiment, but will take care not to make the experiment at all unless we are convinced, for reasons which enter into the ordinary business of life, that it will be a success if it is tried. I do not think the honourable gentleman at all satisfied the House of the necessity of the Government mixing itself up in this affair. He did not show us that private companies could not do all that is required. Of course he tells us that the flag follows trade. Well, we all know that, and if the New Zealand merchants develop this trade the flag will follow—that is to say, if it is desirable that it should. For my part, I think it is altogether beyond the duty of this Parliament or colony to try to bring that about. I think it is the British flag, which is already paramount all over these seas, which should float over those islands. It is not for a little colony like this to give ourselves Imperial airs; and if we are led away into extending the sovereignty of New Zealand over these islands we shall be thrusting ourselves into what will be taken advantage of by greedy and reckless men to secure advantages for themselves out of those who are not actuated by such sordid and greedy motives as they are themselves. That is a danger we must guard against. I do not think the colony is in a position at the present time to risk its credit and money on a scheme of this kind. The time may come when we shall have plenty of money, and when we can afford to run the risk of failure, but that time has not come yet; and it would be wrong of us to allow ourselves to be led away into supporting such a scheme, carried away by the enthusiasm of the honourable gentleman, or to allow him to believe that we were inclined to engage in a scheme which I do not think

is to the taste of the House, and for which no demand has been made by any considerable section of the people of New Zealand. Colonel TRIMBLE.—There are one or two

points which seem to me to have been omitted in the speech of my honourable friend who has just sat down, and which also appear to require a little attention. The honourable gentleman who has introduced the Bill has explained that he does not propose that this should be a monopoly for the merchants of New Zealand, but that it should extend to the various countries enumerated in the Bill. Now, it strikes me that this may lead to a considerable num-ber of complications. We are told in the Bill that, during the time of the guarantee, two of the board of directors at least are to be nominated by the Governor of New Zealand; but there is no provision for any elected members in proportion to the interests of the various countries concerned. New Zealand is only to have one-fifth of the interest, but is always to have one-fourth of the management, and a controlling fourth, because the chairman of the board, who is to be chairman of the company, is to be nominated by the Governor of New Zealand. Supposing that the other directors are to be divided amongst the shareholders in the various countries, then New Zealand shareholders would have no representation except a nominated representation. That is to say, they would have no control in the management of the affairs of the company. It seems to me that this foreign control would be very dangerous to the interests of New Zealand. We are told that the influence of Germany in the Pacific Ocean is already very great; but should we not be making it still greater if we were to give to (termans a direct interest in our trado—giving them, by a sort of treaty of commerce, a right their subjects in that peculiar venture? And the same thing would apply to the other coun-tries concerned. We are told that France has already too much influence in the Pacific: are we going, by means of this trading association, to give it more? America we are not so jealous of; and then, by a peculiar phrase in the Bill, England is put in, and not Great Britain, so that I suppose it is only to apply to that particular portion of the United Kingdom. Well, what is the object of the company? Of course it is stated that the first object is to develop the trade and producing resources of the islands of the Pacific. Now, are not the trade and producing resources of the islands of the Pacific being developed by the merchant enterprise of New Zealand? If a trade is being carried on legitimately, and is paying, is it not better to leave it alone and not to interfere with it? Is it not a well-known interfere with it? Is it not a well-known principle that the less any trade is interfered with the more wholesome it will be? And here we have a trade already growing without any Government protection. But now it is proposed to establish a huge company, with large capital and a guaranteed dividend, which is to compete with the small traders who are already engaged in the trade. The honourable

gentleman who has just sat down said that there are plenty of those who will be only too willing to sell their interest to this com-I say that their interest would not require to be bought by the company, because they would be crushed out in twelve months, and the legitimate trade which is now going on would be superseded by an illegitimate trade, which, in the natural course of things, must lead to waste and extravagance in administra-Then, we are told that it is to promote the education and civilization and industrial habits of the inhabitants of these islands. Now, trade is trade, and if the trader has any other object in view than to make his own profits his trade will go to the bad. He has not time to pursue these grand objects of promoting the education and civilization, and all the rest of it, of the savage inhabitants of these islands. Those who trade do so simply to make money. Are these islanders now being civilized by trade? Have we not to go to a large expense to protect the islanders from the traders? And is it to be supposed that the profits, which are none too large now, will continue, if the merchant, instead of looking after his business, is to devote his time to the education and civilization of the people? thing is simply ridiculous, on the face of it. Then, look at the powers to be given to this company. It is one of its objects "to promote the civilization, education, and industrial employment of the islanders, and thereby discourage the labour traffic among the said islands;" and it is empowered, "generally, to do and perform all such acts, matters, and things as the company may deem incidental or otherwise conducive to the attain-ment of any of the above objects." That is ment of any of the above objects.

to say, the company is to have absolute conas I have already said, the traders now engaged in the Pacific Ocean are obliged to be controlled by a higher authority; but here we are giving to this company absolute power to do all kinds of things that it may think for the moment to be conducive to its own interest. Then, with regard to the power of issuing notes, I venture to say that there was never before presented to this or to any other Legislature a Bill containing such provisions as those contained in the 17th clause. The 13th clause empowers the company to issue notes for one pound and upwards, to redeem them at par, and to reissue them at pleasure. Of course it is expected that there will be a large profit in this - that, in fact. it will be placing the company's paper money in all respects on a par with that of an ordinary banking institution. But here is a curious thing about it - the less the security the company gives, the more is the issue of the notes: "The total amount of the notes payable on demand issued and in circulation shall not exceed the amount of the uncalled capital of the company." So that, if the company—which will have all kinds of people on its list of shareholders, men solvent and men not solvent -- call up £100,000 of capital, it can issue £900,000 in notes; whereas, if it call up £900,000, thus making the notes more and more secure, it can only issue £100,000 in notes. The greater the security of the company the less is its power to issue notes, and vice versa. I venture to say that is one of the most monstrous propositions ever brought forward in a public document: and yet this is considered a financial scheme. Then, we are told that, in proportion to the capital emp oyed, the amount of guarantee is trifling — that it is only £10,000 a year, whilst the capital of the company is to be one million. But we forget that the benefit of the issue of notes is entirely foreclosed if the company call up all its capital; and you will find, as a rule, that these companies call up only a moderate pro-portion of their capital, trusting, as in this case, to the issue of notes or debentures to provide the requisite amount for their trade; so that, if they call up even one-fifth of their capital, £200,000, you are guaranteeing a dividend upon that to the extent of 5 per cent. Now, I have just said that this company must necessarily, if it succeed, kill out other companies. Why, the very fact that you guarantee a dividend of this kind will be in itself sufficient to enable the company to kill out oppo-sition. Another thing I should like to call attention to is this: that wherever there is a guarantee of this kind there is serious waste in the administration of the company. That has been conclusively shown over and over again in the mail steam companies at Home. The unsubsidized companies had to fight their way at first under very great difficulties; but after a while they were protected in the trade by the fact that they were unhampered by waste—the wasteful habits of older companies were not shared by them, and in that way they escaped a very large percentage of the losses to which the older companies were subject, and in time they were able to force their way upon advantageous terms into the protected trades. I think there is a very dangerous provision indeed in the 5th clause:-

"For carrying out any of the objects of the company it shall be lawful for the company to acquire any interest in land, by cession or purchase, or other lawful means, and to acquire steam and sailing vessels, and also charter or

lease any steam or sailing vessels."

A good deal has been said this afternoon in relation to annexation. Now, what has been the first difficulty to meet us in all the islands of the Pacific Ocean? Take Fiji, for instance. Is it not this: that the traders who have stationed themselves in the Fiji and other islands have acquired large quantities of land? not that been the source of the main political troubles in those islands? We know it has been; and here we are providing by Act for the legal acquisition of those lands, under rules which are not provided in the Act, and which, if it is to be effective at all, must leave the company free almost to buy where it likes and at what price it likes. In its dealings it has necessarily to deal with people much below its agents in habits of thought and in knowledge

of contingent events; and the bargains must necessarily be, as they always have been in the past, detrimental to the interests of the natives, and in the end not even conducive to the wellbeing of the company. A great deal has been said about annexation, and about extending our empire in the Pacific. I will not be tempted to go into that, because in all probability we shall have an opportunity of discussing that matter upon a subsequent occasion. I have confined myself to points I have noticed in the Bill, and it seems to me this is one of the most dangerous Bills, if it be successful, and in all probability it is one of the trashiest Bills from a commercial point of view, that ever came before a British Legislature.

Mr. J. W. THOMSON.—This Bill might be almost said to be a new departure. It may be said to be the initiation of a kind of foreign policy, so that in this respect it is deserving of our attention. I am aware that the Colonial Treasurer has devoted great attention to questions connected with the islands of the Pacific. When he was Premier long ago he wrote a great many memoranda on the subject, and he also wrote several very interesting memoranda on the same subject when he was Agent-General, all of which I think I have read. If there is any one, therefore, who could recommend this subject to the attention and consideration of the House, and use arguments to induce honourable members to support the Bill, it is the honourable gentleman. However, I do not think that he has convinced the House. fact, he himself has no great hope, apparently, that his scheme will prove a success, because he spoke of it as an experiment. Now, that, I think, is an argument which should weigh with the House. I think it is very undesirable to enter upon such a large undertaking as this unless we have almost a certainty of belief that it will prove a success. It was not very easy to follow the speech of the Colonial Treasurer. He said a great many things about the islands of the Pacific. He told us that they were islands of great importance; but it is not very easy to put in few words the arguments used by the honourable gentleman. He told us, for instance, that those islands in the Pacific were the objects of ambition and, he might almost say, of cupidity to certain of the nations of Europe. And he instanced particularly France and Germany. Now, Sir, is it to be supposed that, supposing this British colony of New Zealand established a trade with the islands of the Pacific, we shall drive out of these seas. France and Germany? I say, Sir, we cannot look forward to such a result as that. Then, the honourable member spoke of annexation, and he told us that the great question in Australia at the present time was the annexation of New Guinea to Australia. The honourable gentleman went off from this to speak, apparently, of the annexation of these islands of the Pacific to New Zealand, and the way he got up to it was this: that the flag followed the trade—as much as to say that, if we established commercial relations with these

islands of the Pacific, the flag of New Zealand would follow the trade, which I took to mean that these islands of the Pacific would by-and-by come under the New Zealand flag, whatever that might be. But is it to be supposed that, whatever trade we may establish with these islands in the Pacific, we are likely to do anything in the shape of annexing those islands to New Zealand? Is it at all possible for us to drive out of these seas the trade which Australia, France, and Germany have already established with these islands? say this little colony of New Zealand can do nothing of the sort. At the same time, I, like all other colonists, I suppose, desire to see this colony carrying on as large a trade as possible with the islands of the Pacific. The Treasurer has stated that this is not at all a monopoly. What in the world is it, if it is not a monopoly? There is a trade already with the islands of the Pacific. This trade is carried on, I believe, chiefly from Auckland. Now, what would be the effect of the establishment of such a company as this? Would it not be to create a monopoly, and to drive almost all the small traders out of the trade in which they have embarked? The chief argument against the scheme is that it is an unwarrantable extension of the functions of Government. We have already largely extended the functions of Government. The honourable member for Port Chalmers has frequently referred to this in his addresses to the House. We have this session been extending to some degree the functions of Government, and I think, if there is anything we should be very chary about in this House, it is the extension of the functions of Government. And what is this but to extend the functions of Government in the direction of controlling the trade in the South Pacific? I think the best thing we can do with regard to trade is to put as few shackles as possible upon it. Let trade be as untrammelled as possible by legislation in every way, and our trade will prosper. If this were a trading company coming before this House for certain concessions which it was in the power of this House to grant to any such company, then I think it would be a very excellent thing to meet such a company in the most liberal spirit we could. If, for instance, a company were to come before this House and ask us to make certain concessions, say, in the way of reducing the duties upon imported articles, or, say, in the way of reducing duties such as harbour dues, then I think it might be right to grant the company such concessions. But this is not the object of the company. Then, the honourable member for Taranaki referred to the 5th clause, a clause which refers to these companies buying land. Now, Sir, a great part of the time of this Legislature is taken up with questions affecting Native land; and similar questions will be very much augmented, at all events in number, by the passing of such a Bill as this. It is not to be expected that a commercial company is likely to do everything that is desirable in the way of civilizing and educating the natives of those

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islands, or to be very particular as to the way it obtains land. There would be constant ap peals to this House in regard to land unduly acquired from the natives. This is a Bill that ought not to pass, especially in view of the circumstance that it is an undue interference with trade, and that it is an extension of the

functions of Government.
Mr. J. C. BUCKLAND.—When I came to the House this afternoon I had no intention of speaking upon this measure; but when I heard three honourable gentlemen get up in their places and endeavour to damage the speech which the Colonial Treasurer made in bringing this measure before the House, I was struck with the extreme weakness of their speeches, and I immediately came to the conclusion that they exhibited a poor appreciation of the importance of the subject. I was not in my place when the Colonial Treasurer addressed the House, and, although I shall see his speech in Hansard, I was deprived of the pleasure of hearing the eloquence with which the honourable gentleman supported the measure, and the reasons that he adduced for the passing of the Bill. I could not but feel that the three members who rose one after the other expressed their political views. They had not one word of praise to utter in favour of the very eloquent speech which I am sure the Colonial Treasurer addressed to the House. We owe something to a man whose spirit of enterprise would have landed us in a better position to-day if the ideas he brought for-ward in 1870 had been given effect to. Un-fortunately for him, he was tied down by the narrow-minded and miserable desires of one part of New Zealand and another to have something done for them without any consideration whatever for the general welfare of the colony. That feeling militated very greatly against the success of that policy, and to it is due the comparative failure that has resulted from the proposals the honourable gentleman then brought forward. It seems to me that we never do the right thing at the right time. If we had given the honourable gentleman the opportunity of guiding the destinies of the country, they would have been guided in a much better way than that in which they were sub-sequently carried on. If the proposals made by the honourable gentleman with regard to these islands in the South Seas ten years ago, had been given effect to, we should now be occupying a proud position. We should have taken a commercial position with regard to those islands which unfortunately we do not hold now. Since that time the trade with the South Sea Islands has been worked by other countries, and that trade at the present time is not a small one. We have allowed the opportunity we had to pass by, and it is a difficult matter to make up for lost time, seeing that so many other nations are coming into the same field of operations. As regards the future of New Zcaland, I may say a few words in con-nection with this subject. I believe that we must draw our wealth from outside our own boundaries, and we must take advantage of the

Mr. J. W. Thomson

favourable position in which we are placed. We have many advantages in our favour, when we remember the great colonizing race we are so closely allied to, when we know all our advantages as a race, when we think of our magnificent institutions, of our liberal system of government, of all the elements and rea country great. With our means of education I feel that New Zealand will bring forth a race that will develop the wealth of these islands. We shall be able to extend our commerce and draw forth the wealth of those countries lying near to us. Although Germany and France may take up the trade of the islands, I feel that it is our heritage—that, whether we pass this measure or not, it will still be our heritage. Our climate will draw persons of means from Australia, India, and other countries, who will find here a home in their declining years, and will spend their acquired wealth here. Our great natural resources and our great natural wonders will draw people from all lands to our shores. The prosperity of this country does not depend altogether on our mines or our agriculture, but upon drawing wealth from outside I can hardly understand honourable members rising to speak upon this Bill without saying a word on the subject to which it relates. They brought forward some arguments from a political point of view, and from which such a question as this should not only be regarded. After speaking of possibilities, and coming down to the practical position of the case, I am quite willing to allow that there are difficulties surrounding this question of trading with the islands of the Pacific; but we have to bear in mind what has been done by other countries in similar circumstances. There is hardly any other country that I can call to mind that had not the same difficulties to contend with as we have now to encounter. We can remember what was accomplished by the East India Company, which was the means of conducting negotiations with one country and another, and of inducing a mutual exchange of products. I am willing to admit that the cultivation of a trade with these islands will be the growth of time; but it will ultimately become a most valuable trade for this colony. We ought not to hesitate in this work because there are difficulties to be surmounted. There have always been difficulties in the way in undertakings of this kind - far more serious difficulties than those that pre-sent themselves to us. The East India Com-pany had to arm themselves at all points to meet the difficulties of carrying on a trade; they had to fight their way with swords and guns. We are not in the position of having to fight our way in these islands, and I only mention the matter to show that we ought not to be easily daunted merely because difficulties present themselves. I have endeavoured to express my idea that there are great possibilities in connection with the subject which the Colonial Treasurer has put before us. I made some notes of the speeches of two or three gentlemen who preceded me, with a view to answering

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them; but, unfortunately, I have mislaid my However, there is this advantage in that circumstance: that I am only likely to remember those points which are of importance but, when I come to cast about in my mind for the important points, I find that there are really none to be answered. With reference to the honourable member for Selwyn, however, I would say that I think he takes up a most unworthy position in reference to this subject. Him, of all men, I should expect, from his ancestry, to find on the side of those who wish to promote colonization. I read history and I find that, were it not for men who bore the name of Wakefield, we should not be sitting in this place to-night as the representatives of the Colony of New Zealand—that by those men the British Government were forced into taking possession of New Zealand, and that even then they only took it in time to prevent another nation claiming it—the French. Re-membering this, I am indeed surprised to find the honourable member for Selwyn taking so different a course and ridiculing a colonizing movement. Had he been on the other side of the House we should have heard a speech this evening which would have been read with pleasure in every corner of New Zealand; but I venture to say, of the speech which the honourable gentleman has made, that not one person in twenty will get beyond the first few lines of it. The honourable member for Taranaki said the proposals in the Bill are absurd and monstrous; and he asked, who had ever heard of a trading company talking about civilizing the race of the country in which they were going to trade? That in itself proved the Bill to be a monstrosity, in his opinion. But does not the honourable gentleman know that, in the past, all successful colonization has been aided immensely by the religious movements which have always been associated with it? It was religious feeling which had much to do with the success of the settlement of America; and the very same thing may be said of the settlement of this colony. Sir, we can at least introduce the religion of humanity into these islands; and, to my mind, the introduction of that very clause which the honourable member for Taranaki ridicules is only one more proof of the genius of the Colonial Treasurer. But I only hope that, among the traders introduced into the islands, there will not be men like the honourable member for Taranaki, who takes no account of the value of our humanizing influence among the islands of the Pacific. We do not want to hunt down the people of those islands, but to encourage them to trade with us, and to introduce our own people to do work which the natives are not capable of doing. We want to introduce civilization there which will raise the natives; we do not want to civilize them off the face of the earth, but to make use of them in a way that will be beneficial both to them and to us. There were two points in the speech of the honourable member for Clutha which are worthy of notice. He said that this proposal to go trading was an ex-

Company Bill.

ension of the functions of Government, and [ he objected to the functions of Government being extended. Well, I also object to an increase in the functions of Government, but I do not think that by this Bill the functions of Government will be increased. It is the company who are to do the trading: and therefore there is not much force in the argument. At the same time, it is an argument that weighs with me. He also argues that the Bill implies Protection, to a considerable extent. I also object to Protection in any form, but am not satisfied that this measure means Protection. point which the honourable gentleman raises is, that we may be interfering with persons who are already traders and who have sunk their substance in business in these islands. That is, to my mind, a forcible objection, and I am willing to allow it. I do not think there were any objections except these. It may be gathered from what I have said that I am not much in favour of the Bill, but I have thought it my duty to give the mover some credit for what he has done in this matter. The mere fact that he has called attention to a subject of such importance, and prepared it with such patience and care, seems to me to have deserved our thanks. I think, whatever may be the fate of this Bill, that we should look forward to these islands to afford openings for our trade and our commerce. I think we should look forward to the young men who are grow-ing up in our midst making businesses in these islands. At this moment our schools are filled with boys rapidly growing up. What are they In the country districts they are becoming acquainted with country pursuits, with farming, and are learning how to develop the resources of the colony in the future—I have not much fear for them; but in the large towns children are growing up who will not be fit for a country life. They must take to trade, and we must expect to find openings for some of them in these islands. I have said enough to show my appreciation of what has been done in this matter by the Colonial Treasurer, and honourable gentlemen will have gathered, from what I have said, that I intend to support the second reading. I dare say that the Bill will go no further; but let us read it a second time. Let us allow that there is some good in it, and let us express some thanks to the Colonial Treasurer.

Mr. MOSS. - I rise reluctantly to dissent from the proposals in this Bill, and I am sure that it is a reluctance which will be shared by many in this House. The honourable member who has brought forward this measure has shown so much earnestness, so much persistency, and has also shown such a remarkable faculty for giving life and vigour to the pro-posals which he brings down to this House, that I am sure many will feel with me great regret at not being able to accept the proposals embodied in the Bill before us. But I would ask the House to consider the character, the description, of trade which this company is to carry on. It is not a trade in silks, in jewels, in gold, or in precious stones; it is nothing like

the old Indian trade. It is not even a trade in rich furs, like the trade of the Hudson Bay Company. It is a trade in the roughest and rudest materials—beche-de-mer, copra, and per-haps pearl-shell. These are the staple articles of this trade.

An Hon. MEMBER.—Bananas.

Mr. MOSS. — Bananas will not be a staple article of trade, though they may be one of the agreeable products of the islands. And how are these articles to be collected? Agents are to be stationed in all the innumerable islands, or in many of them. They will have to live very isolated lives; they will have to deal with the natives in the various islands in their neighbourhood; and they can only communicate by boat, as a rule. When sufficient quantities of these articles have been collected, a vessel comes round and takes in from the dépôts what has been collected, and conveys it to a central port for transhipment. That is the character of the trade; and necessarily there is great difficulty in providing proper persons to carry on such a trade. Their pay cannot be large; their mode of life will be peculiar; and, although it is a life to which some few take, still it is one which only few adopt from taste, while very many would not go into it unless they saw their way to make more money than the company would be likely to pay. The difficulty of getting good agents has been the chief difficulty with such large companies as have been established; for you must remember that large companies have been engaged in this trade. For example, there is Godeffroi's company, which did a very large business with these islands: but it failed; whereas the success of many of its agents was established by the failure. Such a trade can only be built up as you obtain gentlemen whom you can trust to extend its operations. That would be one of the first difficulties; but I venture to say that there would be another difficulty in which this company would find tiself involved, and that is that it would be really responsible for the treatment of the natives by its agents. Those gentlemen would possess very great power, they would have great prestige, and would be small kings amongst the natives. The natives are always are always and property the property and I would be small w quarrelling amongst themselves; and I would ask the House and the Colonial Treasurer to reflect upon the position of the agents-persons, in some cases, necessarily of not very high character, and with enormous powers amongst the natives of these islands. I do not think the Government of this country should take the chance of becoming responsible, directly or indirectly, for the proceedings of these agents in the most out-of-the-way places in these islands. It would, to my mind, be a very great evil if the Government were to do anything of the kind. Again, it must be remembered that this company would absolutely crush out of existence a number of large and flourishing traders whom we have already in New Zealand. So far as Auckland is concerned, honourable members may not be aware that there are several firms, and I believe even

small companies, already trading from that port, and no doubt there is also trade from other New Zealand ports. Their vessels bring large quantities of dried copra, and a company in Auckland with considerable capital has been engaged for some time in extracting the oil from it. Then, again, a large quantity of pearlshell is obtained by these traders; and I know, as a matter of fact, that one of these firms has been engaged for some time past in selecting proper places in the different islands for the purpose of planting the pearl-oyster. Large beds have been planted, and, as they increase very rapidly, it is expected that in a few years there will be a considerable return from them, and I only hope that the company will reap a fair reward for its enterprise. That company will, however, have to sell out to this projected com-pany, or it will be crushed out of existence. Again, there is a very large carrying tradean independent carrying trade, not confined merely to Auckland, but spread all over the Pacific. Auckland vessels are employed in Fiji, in Samoa, and indeed all over the southern part of the ocean. That is one of the most important trades we have, and yet it would be crushed if this company were once established. So that the success of this company would mean the annihilation of all these other enterprises, which have been so long engaged in developing the trade, and which have been doing it under great difficulties, though in a most successful manner. Reference has been made to the East India Company, to the Hudson Bay Company, and to other chartered companies which have extended the trade of England; but their circumstances were very different, and I would ask honourable members to bear in mind that those companies received no Government guarantee. On the contrary, they came to the English Government to ask for a charter, and they had to pay for that charter. No doubt they had great privileges given to them; but, if I remember aright, the East India Company was not allowed to divide more than 10 per cent. amongst the shareholders, and anything beyond that went to the Crown. In the same way, the Hudson Bay Company had a restriction placed upon the amount that it could divide amongst its shareholders. Although I do not believe the English Crown ever received any large amount from the companies, still they were expected to pay for the privileges which they obtained, and they were not subsidized for carrying on the trade. I would also ask the House to remember that these companies, when established, really stifled trade—that, so far from extending trade, they absolutely prevented its extension. What trade was there under the East India Company, or until it was abolished? Why, it was a mere bagatelle; and it was the same with the Hudson Bay Company. For centuries, almost, these companies kept their country a sealed book, and prevented persons entering it, lest they should form rival companies in trade. Instead of developing the resources of these countries, these large companies have been the most powerful means of shutting them up from

commerce with the rest of the world. If we are to succeed with this company, it must become a monopoly, and it is proposed to make it a monopoly by buying out those already engaged in the trade. Now, what terms will they expect the company to make? There are numbers of persons engaged in this trade-Germans, French, and Americans—besides a number of private persons in our own colony; and, if this company goes into the market to buy them out, it will be only a fat pigeon for them to pluck. That is what the company would become, and it would only get others out of the field on such terms that it would not I should also like to point out an aspect of the question which points in the direction already alluded to by the honourable mem-ber for Clutha. This is a mixture of business and politics. I have never been able to find, either in history are in anything that her personne either in history or in anything that has come under my own notice, that such a union was not fatal to both. The business must become unprofitable, while the politics are sure to be degraded. One of these results is inevitable. An honourable gentleman near me mentions the Suez Canal. Well, I am not sure that the politics of England have been elevated by its connection with the Suez Canal, but I do know that every Government that has been a commercial Government has been tyrannical and marrow minded, influenced only by gain. What do men go into trade for? They go into it entirely for the purpose of making money; and that spirit is subversive of all good government, and must degrade the politics with which it is connected. Take the early history of the East India Company, and consider the atrocities and horrors which were committed in its name, and how thoroughly the greed of gain influenced all its actions. Why, it was only at the end of last century, when a separate and political Governor-General was sent out, who sought the good of the people and not the profit of the company, that government under the East India Company became even comparatively good. It was the taking away from it all trading purposes that made that Government more pure; and, even though that necessitated having a double Government, it was far better than that the company should have the entire control. No one who has studied the early history of that company and reflected on the many dark deeds committed by its officers when India was a sealed country from the rest of the world, would think of establishing a company on those lines with any idea of doing good to the natives. I think I need not say anything more. The objections I have pointed out are, to my mind, quite suf-ficient to prevent my being able, as I should like to have done, to vote for the second reading of the Bill. I do not think there is any necessity for such a measure to extend the influence and trade of New Zealand in these Pacific Islands. I say, leave the people alone -free them from taxation and debt, and the eople of New Zealand will extend the trade. They will not require the Government to aid.

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them. I do not believe there is a country in the world, of the same age and extent, and under such exceptional circumstances, that has been so successful in extending its trade as New Zealand has been. Look at our shipping companies; look at our loan and agency companies, established through almost all the other colonies; look at our banks; look at our carrying trade with vessels large and small spread over all these seas. When we reflect upon these things, and see what the untrammelled energy of our people has done in the past, we may fairly trust to them in the future. I have a firm belief that, if the Government, instead of going into these schemes, would only devote their attention to reducing as far as possible the taxation and debt of the colony, and leave the people untrammelled, they would raise the country to that pitch of greatness which we all

believe New Zealand has before it.
Dr. NEWMAN.—The honourable member for Waikouaiti began to speak as if he thought that everybody who had any objection to this Bill must of necessity have little faith or belief in the powers of the Colonial Treasurer; but I say that any one who would not give that honourable gentleman full credit for the brilliance of his genius would be nothing else than a narrow-minded bigot. Still, however much we may believe in the great powers of the honourable gentleman, that should not prevent us criticising any measures that he may place before us. This is certainly an oasis in the desert; it is a new departure from the dreary work to which we have been devoting ourselves for the last two months; but it appears to me that it is an outrageous proposi-tion, and the more we look into it the more astonishing it becomes. I quite agreed with the honourable gentleman when, some years ago, he placed before us his great Polynesian scheme, for it seemed to me that that was a scheme which must raise the colony to a position of great power, because he then had the idea of gaining the islands of the South Pacific and uniting them to us. But this is only a proposition to establish another ordinary trading company, several of which are already trading with these islands. Therefore it is not, to my mind, worthy of the attention that his previous efforts in this direction warranted. It is usual, when gentlemen either promote companies or bring Bills of this character before the House, to introduce them in a speech giving weighty reasons for their introduction. But I maintain that the Colonial Treasurer on this occasion has given no such speech. He has made a speech telling us, in glowing language, how glorious those islands are; and he quoted the honourable member for Auckland East, who said that these were islands which would open up to us visions of unbounded wealth—that the lads in school, young lawyers, and young men, could emigrate and make the South Pacific a great and mighty nation. That may be all very well, but it is in the dim and distant future. In the near future is the fact that New Zealand is asked to support a company, to which we have

to guarantee the sum of £10,000 per annum. It may be all very well, as the Colonial Treasurer puts it very pleasantly, to say that the progress of this company may be so great that practically this guarantee will never be required; but we all know how glowing prospectuses may be made, and how much they fall short of the mark. I cannot help remembering that the policy of to-day is the policy of 1870. The Financial Statement is only an extension of the grand Financial Statement of 1870; and I am sure that this scheme is merely giving form to the Polynesian scheme which the honourable gentleman introduced to the notice of the colony some years ago; and I venture to say that the 7½ per cent., and all the glowing visions put before us this afternoon, are as baseless as many of the statements made by the honourable gentleman in the past. I leave it to the Prime Minister to bear me out, because he is one of those who have stated publicly and openly that they had very little belief in the Public Works Statement of 1870. When the Colonial Treasurer this afternoon made that wonderful speech, I could not help thinking of some words the Prime Minister addressed to this House some years ago, when he

"The Colonial Treasurer has continually told us that his finance is not delusive; but I should like to point out the promises that have been made in the various Financial Statements from 1870 to the present time, and contrast them with the actual results. One has only to take up the speech made on the introduction of the grand policy of 1870, and compare the promises made then with the actual results that we have now. To look back at that speech in the light of the experience we have had, one would be inclined to think that such a speech had never been made to the Assembly of New Zealand, but had been delivered in Utopia."

He goes on to say that the Statement of 1870 was delusive in every shape and form. I would ask him whether he does not think that the speech made this afternoon in reference to this Bill was not quite as delusive. One of the most remarkable provisions in this Bill is the extraordinary one which gives unlimited power to issue notes. Whenever a new bank is to start we hedge it around with most careful regulations, and are most anxious that its notes should be of full value; and this House the other day passed a Bill saying that all notes should be a first charge on the assets of a bank; and yet the House that passed that measure is now asked to allow a company with, perhaps, a called-up capital of £50,000 to issue notes to the amount of £950,000. If those notes were to be circulated in New Zealand I apprehend that the people of New Zealand would never dream of taking them; but the poor savages in Samoa, Tonga, and other places, who do not happen to know our language—who do not read the grave deliberations of this House—are to take the notes as gospel: to take in exchange for their copra those bank-notes, the security for which is even less than for the famous bank-notes which the honourable member for Port Chalmers would produce with his printingpress and bale of paper. We might go on from time to time amending and enlarging this Bill, until, with a called-up capital of a couple of hundred thousand pounds, we might have millions of these bank-notes floating all over those With them we could buy up all the lands of the poor savages, and the shareholders could hand over their liabilities to some outside company; and in that way New Zealand probably would make very great gain. We could buy up all the inhabitants of the South Pacific Islands, and all their neighbours, and they would have all the bank-notes. But, long before that period arrived, I venture to say that those notes would be as valueless as French paper was at the time of the Revolution, when, if you went into the market to buy a bundle of asparagus, you had to pay 650 francs for it; and at the present time the only use they are put to is in the closets of connoisseurs, who have made a collection of antiquated paper-money. That would be the fate of these notes. This Bill is to promote civilization in the South Sea Islands, and the honourable member for Waikouaiti suggests that it would create a great religious influx. I suppose that is what the Colonial Treasurer once called "the great colonizing instinct of a mighty nation. Another curious feature in the matter is this: that in the Financial Statement the Colonial Treasurer told us that he thought the honourable member for Hawke's Bay had made a very happy suggestion the other day when he said that the Parliament of New Zealand should be not an imperial Parliament, but a Board of Works. I think the wildest visions of empire could not be extended farther than the North and South Pacific, and from the east to the west. By-and-by this company may be successful; but, when you go further into the Treasurer's speech and hear him say that there is to be no monopoly, I venture to say without hesitation that such a company could not succeed without a monopoly. The honourable succeed without a monopoly. The honourable gentleman quoted the East India Company and the Hudson Bay Company; but in each of those cases there was a monopoly, and, in addition, the Hudson Bay Company had one great feature—they were allowed to acquire large areas of land, which they sold after the land had acquired great value, and out of that they made a profit. But it is quite impossible for a company like this to pay when it has to compete with various companies. Another remarkable feature in this very remarkable Bill is this: that the shares are divided into so many lots. One lot is to be taken up in Germany, another in Australia, another in Great Britain, another in France, and a final lot in the United States; and the Colonial Treasurer actually told the House that he expected or hoped that all those countries, which are all grasping for the trade of the Pacific Islands, would agree to concentrate their efforts and unite all their forces to make New Zealand the head-quarters of their trade. Such a thing is not possible. When

France is trying her best to extend her borders, is it at all likely that, because the New Zealand Government gives a guarantee of £10,000 a year to such a company, they will unite their efforts to bring all the trade of those islands to this place? When I think of the future of this company, the way in which we are to get a large trade with no money, with nothing more than a guarantee—when I see how we can issue notes and buy up those poor savages, and think of our own ignorant Natives and how easily we could have got all their substance without cost —I quite agree with one of the Indian Governors who said that he wondered how, with so many opportunities, he had really been so moderate in taking what belonged to others.

Mr. GARRICK.—I regret exceedingly that I do not see my way to support the motion of the Colonial Treasurer for the second reading of this Bill. I think myself that it would be much better that it should not go into Committee, than that in Committee we should attempt to make anything of it. I understand this to be a measure in which the Government by legislation attempts practically to foster a trading company—to throw the sanction of legislative authority around a merely commer-

cial enterprise. It proposes,

"(a.) To develop the trade and producing resources of the islands in the Pacific Ocean, to facilitate the interchange of products and merchandise between the said islands and other countries, and to establish factories for the utilization of the products of the said islands;

"(b.) To promote the civilization, education and industrial employment of the islanders, and thereby discourage the labour traffic among the said islands, and with such objects to purchase and sell lands, to maintain sailing and steam vessels, and generally to conduct the enterprise as they think most conducive to success."

That is practically pledging the authority and the consolidated revenue of the colony to make this a successful commercial enter-prise. The Bill, in the first instance, recites that "the formation of a company in New Zealand to develop the commerce of the said islands, and to further the trade between them and New Zealand, has been proposed;" and that "it is desirable that certain powers should be granted to the said company to enable it successfully to carry on its operations." the footing of that proposal, the Government proposes to sanction a guarantee of at least £10,000 a year; but I think I am correct in inferring that the Bill goes further and pledges the consolidated revenue of the colony to the guarantee of 5 per cent. upon the subscribed capital; and, further than that, I think the Bill may be said—from its throwing the authority of the colony, by means of its Legislature, around the transaction—to practically pledge the colony, in case the commercial venture should prove unsuccessful, to the responsibility of indemnifying all who come into contact with it and who engage in it as a commercial enterprise. It also proposes, on the footing of this colonizing scheme, so called, to invest the com-Germany is trying to seize those islands, when | pany with authority to issue notes of one pound

and upwards, wholly out of proportion to the capital that is to form the basis of the company's operations. I yield to no one in my admiration of the genius of the Colonial Treasurer; and I look, perhaps as much as any one in this House, to his genius to extricate the colony from the position in which it is now placed. But, while I accord him that measure of my confidence, I do not feel that I am prevented from criticising any measure which he doems it necessary to bring down for the consideration of the House, especially when that measure is not introduced as a party one, upon which the Government intend to stand or fall. I think it a wrong principle, in considering a measure of this kind, however bright the flourishes of rhetoric may be with which it is introduced, to rely upon those rh torical appeals as a basis for recommending it. I, for one, am always fearful when I listen to the eloquent strains of the honourable member for Auckland East; and the longer I listen to him the more I feel convinced, at the conclusion of his oration, that there is nothing in it. And I felt, in listening to the introduction of the measure by the Colonial Treasurer, when he was found leaning upon the oratory of the honourable member for Auckland East, that he had indeed a frail platform upon which to rest his recommendation to this House to accept the measure he now introduces for our consideration. I think I am correct in saying that the Treasurer has signally failed in commending this measure to the House. think, with the honourable member for Waikouaiti, that we are not to look at the speeches that have been advanced in opposition to the measure, for they struck me as being what I call "Opposition speeches." Speeches were addressed to the House by what I will term the Opposition side of the House, as it seemed to me, simply because the speakers felt it a duty to say something against any measures coming from the Ministerial benches. Whatever is advanced from the Ministerial benches, we are sure to find the strongest of the occupants of the Opposition benches speak against it. And, whatever may be the eloquence of the honourable member for Selwyn, on this occasion he has not shone in his opposition to the measure. Still, I think that, falling back upon the ob-servations of the Colonial Treasurer in introducing the Bill, we have not had any sound reasoning in support of it. We have not had any reference to a basis of sound facts, warranting the conclusion at which he would ask the House to arrive in sending this Bill into Committee for its consideration. reference to the principle embodied in the Bill, I think myself that it is wrong to ask the House to throw the sanction of legislative authority around a commercial enterprise, and that no reason has been given for so doing. I can understand a matter of subsidy - which I will illustrate by referring to shipping or steam companies, trading between the Old Country and our ports, to which it may be a matter of great importance to render some

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such an enterprise might not fail; and I can understand here, if the proposed company had been formed, if its capital were determined, if the amount paid up were brought before this House, if the nature of its constitution were brought before us so that we might have an opportunity of considering it, and if its claims, based upon all these conditions, were brought before us, we might have an opportunity of thinking, and might reasonably think, that it would be well to subsidize such an undertaking in the interests of the colony and with a view to advance its prosperity. But here I feel that we have no facts placed before us on which to conclude as to the propriety of protecting an undertaking of this kind. And I submit that the absence of any such facts affords strong ground at least for concluding that it would be unwise to commit ourselves to an undertaking of this kind in the depressed condition of the colony, and when it is admitted that distress reigns triumphant. I can understand the policy measures of the Government, when they introduce harbour works and railway schemes, all of which are in the immediate interests of the colony, and are to be carried on within its borders; because, in the event of their success, the colony will derive all the benefits of that success. But I cannot understand how an undertaking the theatre of the operations of which lies beyond the colony commends itself in any such way to our acceptance. I may say further that, in looking to the Bill, it seems to me that the principle of the Bill is open to great objection. Not only have we not the constitution of the proposed company before us, not only is that constitution not even shadowed forth in the Bill submitted for our acceptance, but, on the contrary, we find it is proposed to give, by the 14th section, authority to the company to make by-laws, and that these by-laws are not only intended to operate within New Zealand itself, but they are intended to have some relation at all events to other colonies, and in some measure to affect not only the interests of persons outside New Zealand, but the interests of persons other than British people. Section 14

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says,—
"It shall be lawful for the directors from time to time to make such by-laws as they shall think necessary or expedient for the effi-cient carrying-on and the proper management of the company, and such by-laws shall be deemed to be the by-laws of the company, except in so far as they may be inconsistent with or repugnant to any of the provisions of this Act, or any of the laws in force in the countries where such by-laws require to be applied."

So that we have a company proposed to be incorporated under the provisions of this Act, with power to make by-laws, but such by-laws are not to be repugnant to the laws in force in the country where such by-laws require to be It seems to me to be unsound in principle, having regard to British legislation, and I apprehend I am correct in concluding that we have no such authority; but the bare attempt to bestow such authority as is proposed assistance in the way of subsidy, in order that to be conferred in a measure of this kind seems



to me certainly calculated to involve the colony in very serious trouble. I understand it to be inferred by the Treasurer that France, Germany, and perhaps other countries, will be glad to participate in the benefits to be con-ferred by a trading company of this kind. If other interests are to be considered—and undoubtedly they would be in the passing of this Bill—surely it is not only within the region of possibility, but of probability, that outside interests will greatly control the effectual working of the institution, and necessarily bring into play at all events the interference of foreign interests, if not of foreign authority, in the matter of the government of the company the constitution of which is proposed to be framed under the provisions of this Bill. In a work entitled "Fifty Years of the English Constitution," by Mr. Sheldon Amos, reference is made to the Suez Canal, and it is there stated that-

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"The purchase of the Suez Canal shares incorporated, for the first time in the principles of English Government, the notion that the State could have a financial interest in a commercial undertaking not only conducted in another country, but conducted under the special license and superintendence of the ruler of that country. The result of admitting such a doctrine and acting upon it was, that England became pledged in a wholly new and peculiar way to the support of the exist-ing Turkish and Egyptian dominion in Egypt; that large English political interests were rendered subservient to the decisions of local tribunals in a foreign country; and that English diplomatic and political action in Egypt, and indeed in Europe, was trammelled, or at least indirectly influenced, by a narrow commercial interest, which could not but weigh, however slightly, upon the apparent purity and sim-plicity of the motives of the English Govern-ments."

Of course I readily admit that the illustration I have quoted is not parallel in the application of its facts to the constitution of such a commercial enterprise as is proposed by this Bill, because there the working of the institution was undoubtedly in a foreign country, whereas the working of this institution will, in its primary bearing, take place in our own colony. But I submit, Sir, that the parity of principle prevails, and that the State is here undertaking to have a financial interest in a commercial company, and the Bill is so framed as to extend to the company protection in its relations with a foreign country, and the pledging of the consolidated revenue will follow as a matter of course. For the purpose of illustrating my observation, I will say that the company may not prove to be a success. Here we have the authority to issue notes representing a very large proportion compared with the small amount of paid-up capi-tal. If that undertaking proves unsuccessful, I submit to the House that the Government will in honour have to accept the responsibility of the whole undertaking. Having not merely indirectly fostered, by virtue of a subsidy, the interest of such a company, but having actually

given it existence by the authority of legislative enactment, I apprehend the Government would have to throw around it the ægis of its. protection; and, in the event of such a disaster as occurred to the Godeffroi Company, the honour of the colony would be pledged to see that the company paid twenty shillings in the pound. I again refer to the fact, and submit that no reason whatever has been given why this company should have power to issue notes. The Bill does not pretend to create all the safeguards that the Legislature throws around a banking company. It contains no provision, nor does it compel the company, on its institution, to protect outside persons against so powerful an authority as that of a com-pany allowed to issue bank-notes. It gives all the privileges of a banking company, but without its safeguards. It opens a very wide door to every description of fraud, and confers no protection whatever upon the persons who are likely to be defrauded by the company. I would also ask the House not to forget that the interest of New Zealand in the matter of South Sea Island trading has not been lost sight of in New Zealand. We read in the papers that one of the largest institutions, if not the largest, in the colony—the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency - having a huge interest in Melbourne, another in Sydney, and, I think I am correct in saying, interests in other of the Australian Colonies, have advertised that they have interests in Fiji and in the islands of the Southern Pacific, in which their extended business is carried on in the same way as in New Zealand. Why should this company be brought into competition with the one to which I refer, and why should it be decided by the Legislature that, while one is protected, the other is to be left to trade upon its own resources? That seems to me to be unsound in principle, and this House should be slow to extend legislative authority in the direction sought to be obtained by this Bill. On the whole, then, Sir, I submit that the measure brought down by the Colonial Treasurer for the consideration of this House is one which has not been supported by sound argument or sound reasoning as worthy of our acceptance. I submit, further, that it embodies principles which are unsound, in pledging the State to the sanction of a commercial enterprise without sufficient safeguards for those who are likely to lose by the undertaking in the event of its ultimate failure. I object to the Bill on the ground that it sanctions the creating of paper-money, which may prove very disastrous indeed, and largely increase the responsibilities of the Government in that direction. I submit, lastly, that there have been no references to statistics, no illustrations, no reasons given whatever in connection with it as a commercial enterprise to show that it should receive the consideration of this House. And I submit that, in the interests of New Zealand and of all well-wishers of New Zealand, a measure of this kind, whatever support it is deserving of, has not primarily commended itself

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to our notice. It is a matter that will keep for another session. There is no reason to be so precipitate. Next session, if the Government is prepared to bring down such a measure, supported by such proofs as will commend it to our consideration, I am sure we shall be only too glad to give it attention. But this is a crude and very unsatisfactory measure, and not shown to be calculated in its working to benefit New Zealand. We shall therefore do well to prevent its going into Committe.

Mr. MACANDREW.—I confess that at first sight I was unable to see the importance of this measure. The direction of my mind was that we have got quite enough to do in New Zealand to look after our own affairs, without going outside to the Pacific Islands. At the same time, looking to the future, one cannot help seeing the vast importance—at least, I cannot help seeing the vast importance—of securing commercial supremacy in connection with these islands. In the face of the fact that delays are dangerous, and that other countries are likely to anticipate us—I understand that they are doing so—I say, in the face of that fact, I think that we should be doing wrong if we did not take immediate action in the direction set forth in this Bill. I am disposed to think that we should lose no time in this matter. I differ entirely from the honourable gentleman who has just sat down. I think there is no time like the present. From this Bill it appears the utmost extent of our responsibility would be a payment of under £5,000. The Bill can be so framed—if it is not now so framed, it can be so altered in Committee—as to provide that in no possible contingency can that liability be exceeded; and therefore I am disposed to agree to the second reading. regard to the issue of bank-notes, that is a provision which can be modified or altered in any way should the Bill go into Committee. opinion upon that matter would probably differ from that of many honourable members. I am one of those who look forward to the time when New Zealand may become the seat of empire. It seems to me that the primary nucleus of that empire is the political and commer-cial absorption of the islands in the Pacific to as large an extent as possible. For these reasons, I shall support the second reading of the Bill.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I have not very much to reply to. The objections which have been made to the Bill have been of a general nature, and the strongest objections were made by gentlemen who, it is not too much to say, find it impossible to see in any Bill introduced by the Government, or principally by myself, anything which they could support. The arguments which have been used have not shaken my belief in the measure. The most argumentative reasons against the Bill were those put forth by the honourable member for St. Albans. I take a different view of the measure from what he does. I understand the honourable gentleman considers that it contains some disguised and concealed liabilities, of which I am not aware. I cannot by any possibility see how

the Government or the colony can be liable for anything more than the expressed amount of the liability. I will refer to the objection raised by the honourable member for Parnell, whose opinions, I must say, I highly value, although they are rarely, if ever, upon the side which I take; but he generally does give a reason for the opinion which he holds. I understand that the honourable gentleman thinks that this measure may drive out of the trade a number of small trading vessels. Sir, if that be the consequence, I cannot help thinking that it would be a very beneficent one, for some at least of those small trading vessels which the honourable gentleman takes under his protection are engaged in neither more nor less than a traffic in human flesh. It is said that men of position are not averse from allow-ing vessels they own, of various descriptions, to be engaged in that nefarious and baneful traffic; and, if the consequence of this measure be that some of those vessels are driven from the trade, it would be a very happy one. Does the honourable gentleman know that the cost at present to the English Government of repressing slavery in the South Pacificand it is done very imperfectly - the cost of repressing the traffic in human flesh, amounts to no less than £150,000 a year? It is hardly worth while, perhaps, to criticise what was said by the honourable member for Selwyn. seems to me to be in opposition to any measure brought down by the Government. It may be that I am wrong, but when he speaks upon any subject it always strikes me that he would make an equally good speech upon the other side of the question if for the time being his inclinations so prompted him. With regard to the objections raised by him to the Bill, they seemed to me to be rather puerile. He said the undertaking might not pay—that there might be losses, and so on. Well, he might say that of any human undertaking. We might say all sorts of things might happen that the offices of the company might be burnt down; that the secretary might run away; that rats might get at the bank-notes and eat them up: we might predict any quantity of the other contingencies to which human efforts are liable. It would have been better for the honourable member to have said that it was quite impossible for him to see any merit in any measure brought down by the Government. When some time ago I referred to this subject in a speech I made at Ashburton, the honourable gentleman did not then take the hostile view of it that he does now. Of course he is quite right to alter his opinion from time to time as he finds it desirable to do so. I did not exactly gather the nature of the opposition raised to the Bill by the honourable member for Tarahaki, excepting that it was not a free-trade measure, and that a model free-trader thought only of making money, and did not care for education or civilization. I did not catch what the honourable member for Clutha said very distinctly. I am sorry that I should have interrupted the honourable gentleman, or have appeared to slight his remarks; but I

[HOUSE.]

was unable to hear what he was saying. honourable member for Thorndon paid me the compliment of reading back my speeches of the last fourteen years. I greatly appreciate the honour the honourable gentleman did me, and hope he found the reading both instructive and entertaining. It may be, in the course of the next fourteen years, the honourable gentleman himself, if he goes on as he has been doing lately, will say something that some one may quote with interest. I fail to see that what took place in 1870 has anything to do with the Bill now under consideration. If we do not pass the Bill this session, we shall probably find the time for taking such a step has passed. We should try and realize the effect of the Bill being thrown out. I am persuaded that gradually it will force itself upon the mind of the country that we have been guilty of great neglect in not taking measures to promote commerce between this colony and the South Sea Islands. The honourable member for Selwyn called this Bill a "sordid" Bill. he used that word a doubt was raised in my mind as to whether he understood its mean-ing. What is there sordid in taking means to promote trade and commerce with the islands of the Pacific? I see nothing sordid in the desire to establish relations which may be of a lasting nature, founded upon those principles which have, after all, been the leading link between different nations in times past from remote periods. An objection was also made in regard to the issue of bank-notes. I do not know why a company of this kind should not have the right to issue promissory notes. There is no reason why a trading company should not have the power to issue notes. Coins of all kinds are in circulation in the islands, and they are, in a great majority of cases, very much depreciated by the use to which they have been subjected. Of course the value of the notes issued will depend upon the credit of the company. I cannot see why, under prodent management, the company should not be a commercial success. If it were only the means of establishing communication be-tween New Zealand and the islands it must be of great value. New South Wales pays a subsidy of £2,600 per annum for communication between Sydney and Fiji alone. France is paying a subsidy of £200,000 a year for communication with her Colony of New Caledonia by way of Australia. I am also informed on good authority that the Governments of France and of Chili are trying to jointly arrange for a service from Valparaiso to Tahiti. We also know that Bismarck-whom I may be allowed to term the greatest statesman in the world, since Beaconsfield is dead—is anxious to initiate a mail service, which will cost £200,000, to connect Germany with the Samoan Group. We know, also, that this measure which I am now asking the House to read a second time is, after all, but an imitation of a measure pro-posed by that statesman. There is nothing in posed by that statesman. There is nothing in it of a startling nature; the liability incurred is a very small one; and even to keep up com-

land, this subsidy would not be a large one. In my opinion, the course the San Francisco service will take - not in the immediate future, perhaps, but at no distant time — will be between Auckland, Fiji, Samoa, and Hawaii, and another line of steamers will run between America and Hawaii, the two connecting at Hawaii. I would only further say that there are possibilities in connection with this company which make it worth the while of the House to accept—adopting the phraseology of some honourable members—the small amount of risk which will be incurred under it. This amounts to £10,000 a year, to be returned out of half the profits of the company after 7 per cent. profit has accrued to the shareholders. I am very much obliged to the honourable member for Port Chalmers and to the honourable member for Waikouaiti for the support they have given to the Bill; and I hope that honourable members will see their way, not only to read the Bill a second time, but also to support it through Committee, so that it may become law during the present session. This Bill does not come down to the House only on the recommendation of the House, but also with the approval of a Select Committee of both Houses. It is true the Committee was not unanimous; but there was a far larger number of votes in favour of the Bill than, in my experience, has usually been given in favour of any particular course being adopted in Select Committee. With these remarks, I leave the House to decide the question. The House divided.

AYES, 28. Hobbs Ballance Shephard Shrimski Joyce . Bevan Steward, W.J. B.-Bradshaw Lance Brown Larnach Stout Tole Cadman Locke

Macandrew Vogel. Dargaville McKenzie, J. Fitzherbert Tellers. Guinness O'Callaghan Pearson

Hamlin Buckland, J.C. Richardson, E. Walker. Harper Noes, 89. Hursthouse Allwright Ross Johnston Russell Barron Bruce Lake Samuel Sutter Bryce Levestam Buchanan Menteath Thompson, T. Buckland, W.F. Mitchelson Thomson, J.W. Montgomery Trimble Conolly Turnbull Dodson Newman White, W. Ormond Fergus Fulton Peacock Wilson. Tellers. Garrick Richardson, G. Moss

Hirst, H. For. PAIRS. Against Atkinson Coster Fraser McMillan Morris. Moat.

Rolleston

Grigg

Hatch

Majority against, 11. Motion for second reading of the Bill negamunication between the Islands and Auck-

Wakefield.

EAST AND WEST COAST (MIDDLE) ISLAND) AND NELSON RAILWAY AND RAILWAYS CONSTRUCTION BILL.

A message was received from the Legislative Council stating that this Bill had been passed with amendments, in which the Council invited the concurrence of the House.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I move, That the amendments be agreed to. I wish to say that, whilst the Government adopt this course, it must not be understood that they are sanguine that the Bill will have any effect. The Bill has been altered by this House and by the other House to an extent that may mark the turning-point between success and failure. We shall, however, hope to find responsible companies to carry out the railways designated in the Bill; but undoubtedly the amendments may make this more difficult, and the Government do not feel any great certainty on the subject. If it were not for the alterations made, there would have been much more certainty. I would also say this, as member for Christchurch North: that I believe the main work referred to in this Bill is of such importance to the people of Canterbury and of the West Coast, and they are so determined that the work shall be carried out, that, if it is proved that the measure as it stands is not sufficient to enable the work to be carried out, they will not be content until an Act is passed in such a shape as will secure the construction of the work. I do not wonder that the people in those parts of the country have watched the debates in the House carefully, and are rejoiced to know that the measure has passed. I am in hope that it may be effectual, but, if it is not, the Government will not accept the responsibility. The Government feel compelled to accept the amendments, and will make every effort to give effect to the measure.

Mr. MACANDREW.—What are the amend-

ments made?

Sir J. VOGEL.—Clause 5 has been struck It was emasculated in this House, and now it is struck out altogether.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE.—Is not the route fixed on by the House taken out of the Bill?

Sir J. VOGEL.—Yes; the route is to be fixed

by the Governor in Council.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I should like to point out that all the amendments of any importance made in the Bill in this House were made at the instance of the Government. I do not think that any amendment of any importance was forced on the Government in this House. The Premier brought down several amendments, which were at once adopted. The most important amendment made in the other House is that they have removed an amendment which was made in this House as to the route, and have restored exactly the original words of the clause as it was brought down by the Government.

Mr. STOUT.—That is not an important

amendment.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I think it is a very important amendment. The introduction of the words fixing the route by Arthur's Pass was

one of the greatest difficulties in the way of making the Bill successful; and it is much better that it should be left to the Government to arrange with the company as to what route shall be taken. It should not go forth that any action taken by this House or by the other branch of the Legislature has in any way interfered with the effectiveness of the measure. The Bill, as it now stands, is just as the Government introduced it, the only alteration being that the Council struck out clause 5, in which the Government had accepted an amendment which, as the Colonial Treasurer now says, emasculated the clause. The amendment was carried in this House without a division, and the Government could have divided on it if they objected to it; so that, if it is intended that the impression should go forth that this House has rendered the Bill ineffective, that impression should not exist. And certainly the amendments made by the Legislative Council are in the direction of improving the prospects of the Bill being effective. gladly accept the present motion, for I think it was a great mistake to tie the Government and the company down to a particular route, and that, one which was against the recommendation of the engineer employed by the company.

Mr. STOUT.—The honourable gentleman is, perhaps unconsciously, misrepresenting what took place here and in the other branch of the Legislature; and the reason is that he, as well as other of the real opponents of the Bill, has qualms of conscience with regard to his actions in the past. I say distinctly that, if those who had pledged themselves to support the East and West Coast Railway had done their duty, we should have had a very different Bill from what we have now got. All that the Treasurer has said is that, if there is a failure, the blame for it will lie, not at our door, but at the door of those who, though returned here to support this Bill, have done their best, in the lobbies and in the House and everywhere

else, to prevent it passing.

Mr. BUCHANAN.—I have not been one of those who have opposed the Bill in the way the Premier says, or who have tried to render it unworkable; but I think this ought to be mentioned: The Government consented to have the minimum price of the land to be given to the company fixed at 10s. an acre. They also consented to a considerable modification of the 5th clause as it was originally introduced, and I think the House practically compelled them to do so. I, for one, as the Bill now stands, shall be glad to see a railway made under it, provided that the land to be given to the company will not prove to be spread over a large area that will not be benefited by the railway.

Mr. FERGUS.—I was rather pleased than otherwise to hear the Treasurer say that he did not think there was much prospect of a company taking up this work under the Bill as it now stands. If I had any fear that a company would take it up, I should oppose the amendments of the Legislative Council. It is a well-known fact that I am utterly opposed

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o making railways on a land-grant system, and would far rather take the difficulty at once. If this work is one of colonial importance, as stated by the Treasurer, then let it be undertaken by the colony. But, believing, as I do, with the Treasurer, that no company will take it up on the terms now offered, I will not oppose the Bill at the present stage. I think, however, that, before the colony enters into an agreement with a company, it should distinctly define the route, and say from what point to what other the railway shall go, and then we shall know approximately what quantity of land we shall have to give. Again I beg to express my pleasure at the statement of the Treasurer.

Sir J. VOGEL.—The honourable gentleman to whom I have afforded so much pleasure has manufactured half of it himself. I understand him to say that his pleasure is derived from my saying that there was no chance of a company undertaking the work under the Bill as it now stands. The honourable gentleman misunderstood me. I said that I was not misunderstood me. I said that I was not sanguine, and that I thought the alterations made in the measure were of such a nature as would very likely prevent us succeeding; still, that we should do our best to insure success, but that the Government would not be responsible if the measure were not effec-I said nothing to justify the honourable member in saying that I had stated there was no chance of a company carrying the work out. As to the remarks of the honourable member for Selwyn, I do not believe in death-bed repentances. It is no use talking at this stage of the Bill, and ignoring the fact that it was the opposition of the honourable gentleman, and of the honourable member for Geraldine, which seriously prejudiced the measure; and not only their opposition, but insinuations, which I shall call vile, if it be a parliamentary term, against persons who came forward to support the Bill honestly in the interest of their constituents and the part of the country they represented, saying that they had private reasons for supporting it. I say that the opposition which those honourable gentlemen have offered to the Bill has been the cause of great grief and distress to a large portion of the country, which was entitled to some little return for the confidence it had shown in sending those honourable gentlemen here. action of those honourable members has been such as to render the task of the Government very difficult, and to compel us to accept the Bill with amendments in it which we do not think desirable. I hope those amendments will not affect the operation of the Bill, but, if they do, it will not be our fault.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I will not allow the honourable gentleman to say that I made vile insinuations against members of the House who supported this Bill. I do not know to what he alludes, but there was not a syllable in my speech which conveyed or implied any sort of reflection on any member of the House. I took what I believed to be a right course in opposing the Bill when it first came down, and

shall not go back on that course now. I will not allow statements of that sort, which go on record against me, to be uttered without rising and in the most determined way denying their truth.

Amendments agreed to.

#### LAND BILL. IN COMMITTEE.

Mr. MACANDREW proposed a new clause providing that 10,000 acres may be set aside between Catlin's River and Mataura for a special settlement for Highland crofters.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the clause be read a second time."

#### AYES, 44.

Ballance	Harper	Richardson, E.
Barron	Hobbs	Richardson, G.
Beetham	Lance	Samuel
Bevan	Locke	Shrimsk <b>i</b>
BBradshaw	Macandrew	Stewart, W.D.
Bruce	Mackenzie, M.	Stout
Buckland, W.F.	McKenzie, J.	Sutter
Cadman	McMillan	Thompson, T.
Cowan	Montgomery	Thomson, J. W.
Dargaville	Moss	Tole
Dodson	O'Conor	Turnbull
Duncan	Ormond	Walker.
Fulton	Peacock	Tellers.
Gillies	Pyke	Brown
Grigg	Reese	Steward, W. J.

#### Noes, 16.

llwright	Joyce	Ross
ryce	Lake	Trimble.
uchanan	Levestam	
onoll <del>y</del>	Menteath	Tellers.
uinness	Newman	Seddon
<b>Iatch</b>	Rolleston	White, W.

#### PAIRS.

For.	Against.
Fitzherbert	Buchanan
Shephard.	Whyte, J. B.
Majorit	y for, 28.

1.1

Clause inserted.

Mr. BARRON proposed a new clause providing that "dummyism" should be punished by imprisonment.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the clause be read a second time."

#### AYES, 24.

Beetham	Levestam	Thompson, T.
BBradshaw	McKenzie, J.	Thomson, J. W.
Brown	Montgomery	Tole
Bruce	O'Conor	White, W.
Conolly	Richardson, E.	Wilson.
Dodson	Rolleston	Tellers.
Duncan	Steward, W. J.	Barron
Grigg	Stout	Shrimski.
Jovee		

NOES. 28.

		Noes, 28.	
Ballance		Hatch	Menteath
Be <b>van</b>		Hobbs	Moss
Cowain.		Lake	Newman
Fulton		Lance	O'Callagh <b>an</b>
Guinness	•	Locke	Peacock
Harper		Mackenzie, M.	Pearson

[HOUSE.]

Allwright

Ballance

Bruce

Conolly

Fulton

Joyce

Lake

Pyke Stewart, W. D. Tellers. Reese Sutter Richardson, G. Trimble Samuel Walker. Seddon. Russell

Majority against, 4.

Motion negatived.

Mr. BROWN proposed a new clause, provid-ing for the repeal of section 54, with regard to the sale by auction of sections for which there are more applications than one, and providing for their disposal by ballot.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the clause be read a second time."

AYES, 17.

Ballance Joyce Thomson, J. W. Tole Barron McKenzie, J. B.-Bradshaw Wilson. Montgomery Tellers. Bruce Moss Richardson, E. Brown Duncan . Seddon. Guinness Stout

Noes, 28.

McMillan Samuel Bevan Buchanan Newman Sutter Thompson, T. Conolly O'Conor Trimble Dodson Peacock Pearson Walker Grigg White, W. Pyke Harper Hatch Reese Hobbs Richardson, G. Tellers. Hursthouse Rolleston Fulton Lake Russell Lance.

Motion negatived.

Mr. O'CONOR proposed the addition of a new clause providing for the homestead system being brought into force within the Land District of Nelson.

Majority against, 11.

The Committee divided.

AYES, 14.

McKenzie, J. Steward, W. J. Barron Pearson Thomson, J. W. **Guinness** Tellers. Reese Јоусе. Levestam Richardson, G. Hursthouse Mackenzie, M. Seddon O'Conor.

Noes, 22.

Ballance Montgomery Thompson, T. Brown Newman Tole Conolly Peacock Trimble White, W. Duncan Pyke Fulton Richardson, E. Hatch Tellers. Rolleston Lake Shrimski Samuel Lance Stout Walker.

Majority against 8.

Motion negatived.

Mr. J. McKENZIE moved, That progress be reported.

The Committee divided.

AYES, 10.

Barron McMillan Tellers. Duncan Rolleston McKenzie, J. Lance Seddon Pearson. Mackenzie, M. White, W.

Nors, 25.

Newman Thompson, T. Thomson, J. W. O'Callaghan B.-Bradshaw Peacock Tole Trimble Pyke Reese Walker. Richardson, E. Tellers. Richardson, G. Shrimski Samuel Steward. W. J. Montgomery Stout

Majority against, 15.

Motion negatived.

Mr. J. McKENZIE moved a new clause. The Committee divided on the question, That the clause be read a second time."

AYES, 11.

Barron Peacock White, W. Tellors. Bruce Pearson Rolleston McKenzie, J. Duncan McMillan Thomson, J. W. Seddon.

NoEs, 24.

Allwright Newman Stout Ballance O'Callaghan Thompson, T. Tole B.-Bradshaw Pyke Trimble Conolly Reese Fulton Richardson, E. Walker. Tellers. Joyce Samuel Shrimski Lake Lance Mackenzie, M. Steward, W. J. Richardson, G. Montgomery

Majority against, 13.

Motion negatived. Bill reported.

The House adjourned at five minutes past two o'clock a.m.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, 29th October, 1884.

ond Reading—Third Reading—School Commit-tees Election Bill—Municipal Corporations Bill— Bankruptcy Bill—Police Offences Bill—Govern-Second Readingment Insurance Association Bill.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

SECOND READING.

False Notice of Birth, Marriage, and Death Bill.

THIRD READING. West Harbour Borough Empowering Bill.

#### SCHOOL COMMITTEES ELECTION BILL.

The Hon. Mr. BARNICOAT said that, in view of the important measures on the Order Paper awaiting discussion, he would make very few remarks on this Bill. It would be remembered by honourable members that measures very similar to this had been before Parliament previously, and that in the session of 1883 Bill was before the Council containing similar provisions to those included in the present

Bill, and a great deal more, and it was to this "great deal more" that he attributed the rejection of that Bill by the Council. It was, if he recollected aright, rejected by a very narrow majority—in fact, by the casting vote of the Speaker. He thought it natural that the Council should be averse from altering an Act which had given such satisfaction to the colony as the Education Act of 1877. That measure had been prepared with a great deal of care, but it was not to be supposed that it would stand for all time. It was only natural that, after a time had elapsed, some little flaws should be discovered which required amendment. Indeed, generally, Bills had to be amended the next session after they were passed. The session after that they generally came up again. Then, by-and-by, they were brought forward consolidated, and, after consolidation, were again amended. The Act of 1877 had stood now untouched for seven years, and that fact was a very creditable one in itself. In proposing the amendments that were now required, he disclaimed any intention of disturbing the educational system of the colony. The Act of 1877 might be said to have been a conglomerate measure. It was made up of fragments of former provincial legislation. It was to be presumed that the modes of electing local Committees prescribed were in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants of the different districts; but, unfortunately, none of these was adopted for the whole colony. The mode adopted, which it was now proposed to abolish, had been very un-fortunate, and had given a very great deal of dissatisfaction throughout the colony. He referred to the system of cumulative voting in the election of School Committees. School Committees consisted, it would be remembered, of seven members. Every voter had seven votes, and he might divide these as he liked among the candidates. In practice this had proved very unsatisfactory, of which they had had, in this and previous sessions, abundant evidence. Instead of leading to what every electoral system aimed at—the return of those in whom the electors had the greatest confidence—this system often led to the most grotesque results. The electoral bodies were very small, the number that voted was small, and the result of the system was often antagonistic to the wishes of those immediately concerned. There was a theoretical defence of this mode of election: it was supposed to afford what was termed "re-presentation of minorities." However desirable this representation of minorities might be in legislative bodies, it appeared to him to have no significance or application to administrative bodies, and, especially where the administrative bodies were very small, it seemed to be needless and mischievous. If, indeed, any discretion were allowed to School Committees, there might be some semblance of reason for having this cumulative vote; but there was none. Their cumulative vote; but there was none. duties were—he would not say very narrow, but—very strictly defined. The educational system was a purely secular one, and if the Committees attempted to deviate from the

strict line they would be set right by the Education Board of the district. That this system of election was obnoxious to the householdersthe electoral body—had been shown in more ways than one. A gentleman who had taken much interest in this subject had, in 1882 or 1883, endeavoured to collect from the School Committees of the colony their opinions upon a variety of subjects in connection with education, and, amongst other things, their opinion was sought as to whether the system of cumulative voting had been a failure or not. No less than 352 Committees replied to these interrogations, and, of these, 288 declared against this mode of voting, and 64 in its favour. He thought that greater unanimity than that could not be expected, and that there was no doubt that the system this Bill sought to remove was unacceptable. A very large number of petitions against it had been presented to the Council in 1883. This year some sixty-nine petitions had been presented, but the Public Petitions Committee had recommended that the Education Act should remain intact. He did not know whether it was usual for a Petitions Committee to express an opinion on such a point. If it was, he could not complain of the opinion expressed on this occasion; but, from his little experience of Parliament, he considered the expression of such an opinion unusual and uncalled-for. The Committee professed to be unanimous in its opinion. With some trepidation, he went to the minute-book of the Committee, and he there found that only four members were present; so that the report re-presented the opinions only of four-ninths of the Committee. The mode of election of School Committees might appear to be a small question, but, when it was remembered that there were about eight hundred School Committees in the colony, he thought it ceased to be a small question, and it would be seen that it might cause a very great deal of trouble throughout the whole of the colony. There were also some other points on which amendments were sought which experience had shown necessary. One was to make the educational year and the financial year of the colony coterminous. convenience would be obvious. School Committees were generally rural, and, as the house-holders complained of being called from their harvesting in the very busiest season of the year, in January, it was sought by this Bill to have the elections in April instead. Another amendment provided that a disputed election should be decided by the Resident Magistrate, instead of by the Education Board. It also provided for the removal of Committeemen who did not attend to their duties. Another amendment would extend the electoral power to all residents, whether male or female, instead of confining it to householders. The Council, he believed, would be conferring a very great boon on a very large number of householders by passing the Bill. If the Bill became law a very great deal more attention would be given to the election of Committees, and the Committees elected would be more acceptable. The amendments were of a very rational character, and would be productive of great ad-

vantages.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN said this was not the first time that the Council had been asked to pronounce an opinion upon a Bill of this kind, and on every occasion the Council had refused to entertain any project which would interfere with the Education Act as it now stood on the Statute Book. The peculiar circumstances surrounding the question of edu-cation in this colony made, he thought, an ad-herence to that rule still imperative upon the Council. Not having heard sufficient of what the honourable the mover of this resolution had said to enable him to answer what had been urged in favour of it, he (Dr. Pollen) thought it sufficient to look into the provisions of the Bill, and he could see in its provisions nothing of sufficient importance, affecting the integrity of the general measure, to induce the Council to consider the amending Bill more favourably on this occasion than on former occasions. There was no question of public policy more important, which concerned the vital interests of the colony more nearly, than the education of the people; and he felt very strongly that, under these circumstances, none of what he might call tinkering with great measures on the part of individuals should be tolerated with respect to a measure of this kind. He thought that, whenever it was politic that any altera-tion should be made in the Education Act as it stood on the Statute Book, the responsibility of making that alteration should devolve on the Government of the colony, who had the best means of knowing where the provisions of the Act were defective, and who would be able to take an absolutely disinterested and unprejudiced view of the amendments that were required to be made in that measure. Now, the only point in this Bill which was really of vital importance was the one of all points with which he thought the Council and the Assembly generally should not at present deal—that was, as to the election of School Committees, and the provision that was very properly made in the Act for the representation of minorities There was no other on those Committees. point in the Bill of sufficient importance, in his opinion, to induce the Council now to depart from the rule which it had set down for itself on former occasions, or to proceed further with the Bill; and, in order that the Council might have an opportunity of expressing its opinion, as he hoped it would do, in that direction, he would move, as an amendment, That the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS did not think the Hon. Dr. Pollen had given any reason why this Bill should not receive the consideration of the Council. He (Mr. Reynolds) quite agreed that this was not the first time the proposal had come before the Council and been rejected; he thought it was three or four times that this proposal had been made and rejected in that branch of the Legislature. But they must also take into consideration the feeling of the people throughout the colony, and he was

prepared to show that there was a very strong feeling on the question from north to south. He had himself been making inquiries, and the honourable gentleman who introduced the Bill in another place had gone to very great trouble in order to get information from the various Committees, and almost all the Committees had declared in favour of the alteration.

The Hon. Mr. OLIVER.—How many?

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS could not say what number, but he understood that almost all who had replied had expressed themselves in favour of this change. Now, when this Bill had passed another branch of the Legislature, and had been so often supported there by large majorities, as it had been this session—

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—What majority? The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS. — A very fair

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—One.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS had thought it was four, which would be a very fair majority in a case like this. But, even if it was only one, he said that, the Bill having been before the Council on three previous occasions, it was necessary to take the matter fairly into consideration. He did not say that the Council was compelled to pass the Bill, but he thought it ought to be fairly considered, and that his honourable friend should not have proposed its rejection—a proposition which he hoped the Council would not agree to.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND was very glad his honourable friend Mr. Reynolds was of opinion that this Bill was not to be thrust down their throats; and he trusted that, on this oc-casion, the Government would return to its normal condition and vote on both sides. As the honourable the mover had said, the Bill mainly consisted of the clause to repeal the representation-of-minorities clause in the Act. The honourable gentleman had said that the operation of that clause had been very un-satisfactory, and often grotesque. It might have been unsatisfactory to some Committees, but the grotesque result had been precisely what the clause was intended to effect—the representation of a minority on the Committee. It might, of course, be a question whether or not it was desirable to have a minority on a Committee. His honourable friend said these Committees were administrative bodies, and strictly hedged in. But they had often occasion to see that administrative bodies might carry on their work in a satisfactory and peaceful manner without absolute agreement of opinions among themselves. A number of men might come together from opposite political poles, and yet sit in the same Cabinet, and manage to carry through session after session Therefore it did not at with great comfort. all follow that the administrative powers of the Committee were impaired by one member being what might be considered unsatisfactory by the rest. On the other hand, he was able to say, from his own narrow observation, that the result was sometimes very good, and that persons who, in the flood of a majority, would be passed over, were put on the Committees by

Hon. Mr. Barnicoat



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the operation of this vote. He had heard of a case where a number of gentlemen, desir-ing to test the operation of this minority vote, selected a person thoroughly fit, and who proved a first-class Committeeman, but who would not have put himself forward, and would not otherwise have been on the Committee; and they had put him in by this vote. This, he thought, disposed of the argument from the grotesque case spoken of by his honourable friend. That the results of elections were antagonistic to the wishes of the persons interested he ventured to dispute, unless they admitted that the majority was the whole. He knew his honourable friend Mr. Reynolds considered that, when there was a majority of one, that majority ought to sweep everything before it; but he (Mr. Richmond) believed that minorities were often very respectable, and that the wisdom of the world was shut up in the heads of very few people. He did not at all agree with the Hon. Dr. Pollen as to the undesirability of touching the Act at all; he believed there was a very important amend-ment requiring to be made, and it was in view of that great amendment that he called upon those honourable gentlemen who sympathized with the 9,900 petitioners who had been reported on to-day as desiring an amendment of the Act, to defeat the passing of this measure. He believed that all who sympathized with them were bound to retain this minority vote. The present condition of the colony seemed to him to make this a very apt time for saying a word on behalf of that body in the State—a very large and rapidlyincreasing body-who were represented by these petitioners. He thought he was not out of order in referring to it now, because he looked upon this clause as a safeguard for those persons whenever the time might arrive that they might desire to take part in the elections of these Committees. There were other things in the Act which he desired to see amended, and he should probably desire to see them amended in the sense in which these petitioners desired the Act to be amended. He desired that matters outside the mere question of bread-andbutter, and purely secular matters, should be left as open as possible to the public at large—that those who held views something more than merely negative should be allowed an opportunity of teaching their children the meaning of those views. The Council should not suppose for a moment that, under our socalled secular system, they were not really establishing views. They were establishing, at the present moment, negative views: they were establishing what was called "freethought"—as if any real thought could be otherwise than free. The time must arrive very soon and, thank Heaven, one of the sweet uses of adversity would be to hasten that time-when a great change must take place in liberalizing the education system of the country in that direction. He must say that, when he heard the proposal on the part of the Government of the colony to cut off the firewood and various little refinements in the schools, he had said,

"Now is the time when a more liberal system is to be instituted." He called on all who sympathized with the views of these 9,900 petitioners to join in opposing the destruction of this minority clause. He would rather have let the Bill pass its second reading; but, in any case, he would have resisted to the utmost the rescinding of that clause, even if the second reading were carried.

Election Bill.

The Hon. Mr. OLIVER looked upon this Bill as an insidious attempt to get rid of a measure of fair-play dealt out by Parliament to a certain class in the community. It was generally acknowledged that the time of the year at which the School Committee elections were held — the first week in January — was not a convenient time; and that fact, and one or two other small objections to the law as it now stood, had been seized hold of several times by those who wished to do away with our present system, and under cover of this they sought to introduce clause 7 of this Bill, which really did away with the cumulative vote. Now, it was remarkable that, while in England this vote for school elections had met with a high degree of approval and success, these attempts to abolish it should be made year by year in New Zealand. In some things they had a right to be proud that they were abreast of the times, but if they passed this 7th clause they would disgrace themselves, because they would do away with that protection which the law now allowed to sections of the community in allowing them representation on School Committees in accordance with their numerical strength. No injury could be inflicted on any section of the community as the law now stood. No section, whether Free-thought, Jew, Dissenter, or any other, could have greater representation on the School Committees than its numbers entitled it to. Why they should year by year be called upon to do away with this measure of fairness he could not for his life understand. It seemed to him to arise out of the narrowest sectarian feeling. As to the appeal made to the Committees which had been mentioned by the Hon. Mr. Reynolds, that appeal had not been successfully responded to, from the honourable gentleman's point of view; for, considering the number of School Committees in the country, a very small minority had responded in the sense the honourable gentleman referred to. He was quite sure, from what he had observed of the course of thought at Home, that, when the Redistribution Bill that had been promised by the Government was introduced there, they would see the principle of proportional repre-sentation of sections eagerly contended for; and he thought there was a probability that, to a considerable extent, it would be adopted. He thought some detriment had been caused to the principle in the colony by calling it "the principle of representation of minorities." That was not its true name. The true name was "proportional representation;" and, if it were simply considered in the light of giving the power to every section to be represented just in proportion to its numerical strength, he thought that much of the objection they had heard against it would disappear. He hoped that, as on several previous occasions, the Council would not allow this bone of contention to be again thrown down in their midst. The presence of one Catholic or one Jew on a School Committee could not be detrimental to the business intrusted to the Committee. On the contrary, it might be regarded, he thought, as a safetyvalve and an outlet for what would be otherwise the cause of deep discontent.

School Committees

The Hon. Captain BAILLIE desired to say a few words in explanation of the vote he should give on this Bill. He could not support the amendment, because the Bill contained some valuable suggestions as to the election of Committees. Of course there was a little sting in it which every one saw at once. When a similar Bill was introduced three years ago by the Hon. Mr. Menzies, the clause containing the repeal of the cumulative vote was made so far permissive that the Education Boards were allowed to make it operative or not as they might choose. In a subsequent session, when the Bill was again brought forward, there was a long clause of about thirty lines providing as to how the elections of the Committees were to be conducted—by ballot, &c.; and then there was a little bit at the bottom, which read, "Provided always that no elector may exercise a larger number of votes than there are persons to be elected, nor record more than one vote for any one candidate." That, being put in so quietly at the end of the clause, might have escaped the notice of all except those who put on magnifying-glasses, and so were able to see little things. On this occasion this matter had been introduced in the clause of the clause duced in a clause by itself; so it got more important each year. At the same time, he considered the proposal one of the most illiberal proposals that had ever been introduced into that Council. It was taking away the rights of the subject on a most vital point. They knew that in all these School Committee districts there was a certain amount of religious feeling in educational matters, and now it was proposed to deprive the various sects of the power of having some representation on the Committees. They had been told that a large majority of the Committees approved of this change; but, when they looked at the course of the Bill in another place, they found that it had been carried by a majority of only one, which showed the opinion of the electors of the country most decidedly. As shown by that division, it could not be said, at any rate, that a large majority of the electors were in favour of this change. He would vete for the Bill, all of which but the sting he approved, and the sting he hoped to see taken out.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN would support the amendment. As to the Hor. Mr. Reynolds's statement that there was discontent throughout New Zealand, he would like to know where it was. It certainly did not exist in the districts with which he was most acquainted, and in which he moved about a great deal: he had not heard of it there. He did not defend the manner in which the elections were held now,

but the present mode was far better than that proposed by this Bill. What was wanted to make the system complete was to arrange that the nominations should be made on the night of the annual meeting, and that the poll should be held subsequently in the day-time; but the cumulative vote should be retained. That vote had never led to any disadvantage in the working of the Committees, and it enabled the different sects to get representatives on the Committees when they desired. He did not think it was wise to do away with the power of representation of minorities. As to the large majority in the other House that the Hon. Mr. Reynolds had spoken of, that was a large majority of one, and he did not think that should be a guide to their Chamber in the matter. When a Bill supported by a large majority in another place was sent up to them three or four times, with an election intervening between those times, then he thought careful consideration should be given to it. But this was not such a case - there had been a majority of only one in favour of this Bill in another place. He should like to see the system of election amended in the way he had mentioned. As they all knew, the present system had many disadvantages, and it was often the case that all the householders in a district could not get into the place where the election was held. The system was certainly open to improvement; but the cumulative vote should be retained, and he should therefore oppose the Bill.

The Hon. Captain FRASER would support the amendment. Who could support a sectarian Bill like this, coming from Waimate, where there was such a large number of Catholics? It would lead to great heart-burnings and many other disadvantages, and he thought it would be most unjust and unfair. He thought it high time that this tinkering with the Act should cease. Bills of this kind, brought in at the fag-end of the session, should all be thrown out—they had not time to give them sufficient consideration. He thought this

Bill should never pass the Council.

The Hon. Mr. WILLIAMSON would support the amendment mainly for the reason the Hon. Dr. Pollen had adduced: that this was a question of policy which should only be dealt with by the Government. He thought private members should not be allowed to tinker with a question of such magnitude as this, and for that reason he supported the amendment. The Hon. Mr. Reynolds stated that a large number of the Committees had expressed themselves in favour of the change, and, at the same time, had stated that this Bill had been carried by a large majority in another place. He was very much inclined to think the honourable gentleman had not informed himself correctly. was shown that the majority in another place was a majority of only one, and he thought they might probably judge of what the honourable gentleman had said with regard to the number of Committees by what he had said as to the large majority in the House. He thought on inquiry it would be found that the two statements would come out much the same.

Hon. Mr. Oliver

The Hon. Dr. GRACE wished to say, in reference to the remarks of the Hon. Mr. McLean, that the real reason why the ballot had not been adopted in the election of School Committees was that the expense would be great. He himself had had the honour of introducing the principle of cumulative voting into the Education Act of 1877, and, when that measure was before the Council, of advocating that the election should be by ballot; but the Minister representing the Government in the Council had said the expense involved would be much too great. That was the reason for the deficiency alluded to in the Act. With regard to the question of the date of holding the elections, the Government could at any time bring in a Bill altering the time of election to such a period of the year as would suit the convenience of the colonists generally. He did not see how the Hon. Captain Baillie could consistently vote for the Bill, because its prin-ciple was the alteration of the principle on which the elections were now conducted, and in passing the second reading of this Bill they would affirm the necessity for altering that principle. He would therefore ask his honourable friend to take his (Dr. Grace's) view of the matter, and assist to at once kill this insidious attempt to still further render the Education Act objectionable to a large class of the community. He did not wish to part from this subject without making a somewhat brief reference to the manner in which it had been introduced by the Hon. Mr. Barni-He found that the only argument adduced by the honourable member which could be supposed to be worth anything was the argument based on the hypothesis that representation of minorities in administrative bodies was of no importance, however important it might be in the case of legislative bodies. He was not going to take up the time of the Council in discussing the general principle thus sought to be laid down, though it was certainly fallacious. It was contended that a large ma-jority of the Committees were in favour of an alteration in the present mode of election. He would ask honourable gentlemen to consider for a moment the industry that had been wasted on this measure by the honour-able member for Waimate. For years he had been exerting his powers, supported by the printing press at his command, to influence public opinion on this subject; and yet, in response to his application to the various School Committees for their opinions, he received re-plies from about 350 Committees, and, of these, 64 were in favour of the Bill as it stands, while 280 were in favour of the change proposed. In other words, not one-third of the Committees of the colony declared themselves in favour of an alteration, notwithstanding the unflagging efforts of the honourable member for Waimate. It was simply preposterous that the Council should be called upon year after year to consider a measure of this kind.

The Hon. Mr. BARNICOAT, in reply, said the Hon. Mr. Oliver had asked how many Committees were in favour of the change. There

were 64 only in favour of this mode of election, and 288 were against it, 352 Committees altogether having replied. Other Committees had withheld their opinions, which therefore might be presumed to be either favourable or un-favourable. It had been said that he advocated sectarian views; but it appeared to him that it was rather those who objected to this measure that held sectarian views. For his part, he wished to regard School Committees without reference to denominational considerations; he did not wish to know whether their members belonged to this or that denomination. He understood the Hon. Dr. Grace had said that only one-third of the Committees were in favour of doing away with the present mode of elec-tion, but he did not know how the honourable gentleman arrived at that conclusion.

Election Bill.

The Hon. Dr. GRACE said he had got the information from the figures quoted by the

honourable member himself.

The Hon. Mr. BARNICOAT said only 352 Committees had expressed an opinion. the honourable member mean to infer that those Committees which had not replied were desirous of retaining the existing arrangement?
The Hon. Dr. GRACE said he did infer

The Council divided on the question, "That

the word 'now' stand part of the question." AYES, 7. Bonar Acland

Mantell Baillie Kohere Reynolds. Barnicoat Noes, 22.

Johnson, G. R. Reeves Brett Buckley, G. Buckley, P. A. McLean Richmond, J. C. Oliver Scotland Peacock Waterhouse Dignan Fraser Peter Wigley Williamson Pharazyn Grace Hart Pollen Wilson. Henderson

Majority against, 15.

Bill ordered to be read a second time that day six months.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS BILL. The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said that when it originated in another place it consisted of only a short title, a preamble, and an enacting clause, and it was in that condition when he undertook to take charge of it in the Council. The Bill had since been largely amended, and was in a condition which he thought demanded that it should receive the attention of the Government rather than of a private member. So far as he himself was concerned, he did not intend to accept any amendment to the Bill that was not on the Order Paper, and he hoped to receive the assistance of the Council in putting the Bill right.

The Hon. Captain FRASER thought this was one of those Bills which had been unfairly treated in another place. Various honourable members had insisted on inserting all sorts of clauses in the Bill, which he would like to see

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restored to its original condition, by way of teaching a lesson to those who had amended it in the manner they had. He hoped that the whole of the added clauses would therefore be struck out in Committee.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE thought this was a very important Bill, and he could not believe that the alterations which had been effected in it could have been introduced with sufficient consideration. A measure of this importance should have been introduced entirely on the responsibility of the Government This was a Bill consisting of various suggestions thrown out on the spur of the moment, and affecting the Municipal Corporations Act in some of its most essential provisions. Take, for instance, the 6th clause, providing that a special loan might be raised for separate parts of a borough; also the 10th clause, which amended the provisions as to the proposal for special loans, and repealed section 10 of the Act of 1880. These amendments were of the most vital importance, and he believed that the existing law relating to proposals for special loans had exercised a most beneficial influence in the community by checking the passing of loans advocated solely with a view to finding employment in any particular locality, or stimulating an artificial prosperity. It was proposed that this very important provision of the existing Act should be altered. For him-self, he felt very doubtful whether they were justified in going on with the Bill in its present shape. He rather leaned towards the moving of an amendment to this effect: That any Bill amending the Municipal Cor-porations Act should be introduced on the responsibility of the Government. He would move that, as an amendment, simply with a view of giving the Council an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the question.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY did not rise for the purpose of opposing this Bill because it had not been introduced by the Government. He wished to know what the effect of the resolution would be.

The Hon. the SPEAKER.—The effect of the resolution would be for the present to do away with the Bill; but it would not have the same effect as a motion that it be read a second time this day six months, because it could be revived again.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN would certainly give his vote in favour of the amendment. He had a general objection to the process of tinkering with legislation. In this case it was proposed to amend an Act of large policy, and one could not be aware how the provisions of the principal Act were affected by the amendments, without some guide or in-struction. The suspicion in all cases of this kind of legislation was generally that it was sought to introduce amendments of a general law to serve sometimes a local, and very often, he was sorry to say, a personal, end. He was not, however, applying that rule to this Bill, because he did not know anything about it; but he had that general suspicion. He

Hon. Captain Fraser

considered it the duty of the Government on all occasions to take the responsibility of the amendment of these Acts; and the representative of the Government in the Council should inform the Council whether the measure met with the approval and sanction of the Government. That, he thought, was a responsibility which properly devolved upon the Government. Without pronouncing upon the merits of the Bill, he would vote for the amendment.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN agreed that the Bill should bear the imprint of the Government upon it. Two or three of the clauses in the Bill were very good, and he approved of them; but he did not know that they were of such im-portance that it was necessary, in order to pass them, to bring in a Bill amending a statute regulating such large interests as those dealt with by the Municipal Corporations Act. He was not prepared to say that there were not several provisions of the Bill that he would approve of, but there were several that he certainly could not agree with. He would not take up the time of the Council, but would point to clause 12, which provided that a man should take a horse and dray to a particular weighing-machine. He did not know that one weighing-machine was better than another, and he thought that the clause had been passed at a very late hour of the night, or without sufficient consideration. He would vote for the amendment, because it did not do away with the Bill, and, if the Government saw that certain clauses of the Bill were absolutely necessary, they could have it put on the Order Paper again. The Bill was one which the Council ought not to hurriedly pass.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND said he was

anxious to hand the matter over to the Government. There were some clauses in the Bill, however, which appeared to be very much needed. Though they might be required for special purposes, they might also be of general utility. He hoped that even now the Government would be willing to put its name upon the Bill and hand it to the Law Officer for better adjustment. The Bill required to be put in order, because as it had come down from another place there were apparent contradictions. He felt as if he almost owed some apology to the Council for having taken the position he had done in this matter. He had done his best to become acquainted with the effect of the Bill, and was bound to say that he saw very good reason for several clauses of it. For one clause in particular there was a demand in several places: that was the clause respecting special rates; and, at the same time, it appeared that it would be perhaps a hardship if it were not passed. If the second reading of the Bill were passed, he would at once put himself in communication with his honourable friend the Colonial Secretary, and be his servant in the matter, and assist him, if possible, in putting the Bill into shape, and would not ask that it should be committed until time had been allowed for placing the matter on a better footing.

Amendment agreed to.

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BANKRUPTCY BILL.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said its object was to amend certain sections and subsections of the statute of 1883. He need not inform honourable members that, up to the passing of that Act, the state of the bankruptcy law was considered to be very unsatisfactory. After a very considerable amount of time had been spent by a Joint Committee of both Houses of the Legislature, a measure was passed in 1883 which was considered to be perfect; but, in the working of that Act, it had been found necessary that the amendments should be effected which he now asked the Council to adopt. He might mention, for the information of the Council, that nearly all the amendments had come from the Judges, who had found a great difficulty in interpreting the law; and most of them had been recommended as necessary for carrying out the Act of 1883. There was one important provision in this Bill-section 10-with reference to after acquired property of a debtor. It was not in the Act of 1883, but was in the old Act of 1867. To his mind it was one of the most useful provisions that could possibly have been allowed to remain; but, in the wisdom of those gentlemen who constituted the Committee, it was eliminated from the Bill. Then, great difficulty was found with regard to the service of notice, and provision was made for that also. The only other important provision in the Bill was that regarding distress for rent. Questions of an important character had been raised in the Supreme Court, and the Judges - or, at least, one Judge—had been unable to come to any decision that was not of an unsatisfactory character with regard to the working of the Act. The 16th section was provided to set that question at rest. As he had said, most of these amendments came from the Judges, or from the Assignees who were administering the Act. The various provisions of the Act he would explain in Committee, if the Council would be good enough to allow it to be read a second time.

Bill read a second time.

#### POLICE OFFENCES BILL.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said it was a consolidation Bill, and proposed to repeal thirty-four Acts or ordinances which were now in force in the colony. It had received special attention from the Revision Commissioners, who had made a very careful precis, which was prefixed to the Bill now before honourable members. One of the principal objects in view in introducing the Bill was to make the law uniform, so far as police offences were concerned, all over the colony. This was the more necessary seeing that the police were now under one head, and were being shifted from place to place, in accordance with the terms of a resolution which was passed by a Committee some time ago. Policemen, when they had resided in one place and made themselves acquainted

with the particular laws of that place, when they were shifted found themselves in very awkward positions, and perhaps sometimes went beyond the law. That was one of the principal reasons why this Bill was brought up in its present shape. But, apart from that, it had been considered desirable to have the police offences made uniform. It was proposed to repeal, in the first place, an Imperial Act with reference to Sunday trading—an Act of Charles II.—and also some of the colonial ordinances which were in existence, for the purpose of making one uniform Act, so that any one who might look at the Act might see exactly what police offences were.

Bill read a second time.

# GOVERNMENT INSURANCE ASSOCIATION BILL. IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 38.—What contracts Board may enter into.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN moved, That the words, "and also contracts for the insurance of sums to be payable in the event of personal disablement, injury, or death resulting from accident only," at the end of the clause, be struck out.

The Council divided on the question, "That the words be retained."

#### AYES, 11.

Brett	Dignan	Pollen
Buckley, G.	Fraser	Reeves
Buckley, P. A.	Henderson	Reynolds.
Campbell	Lahmann	•
_	Nowa 15	

Noes, 15.

Barnicoat McLean Peter
Bonar Miller Waterhouse
Brandon Nurse Whitmore
Chamberlin Oliver Williamson
Hart Peacock Wilson.

Majority against, 4. Words struck out. Bill reported, with amendments.

The Council adjourned at ten minutes past ten o'clock p.m.

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Wednesday, 29th October, 1884.

Second Readings—Third Readings—Gold Fields—
Bee-keeping—Alexandra Lock-up—Manawatu
Timber Trade—Kumara-Goldsborough Telephone—Canterbury Licenses—J. R. Clement—
Waiheke Telephone and Coromandel Wharf—
East and West Coast Railway—Hastings Wool
Traffic—Field's Track—Kumara Water-races—
Gold Duty Abolition—Kumara Tail-race—WoMorris and Others—Kumara Water-race—Contagious Diseases Act—District Railways—West
Coast Settlement Reserves Bill—Land Bill—
Wellington College Reserves Confirmation Bill
—Westland Education District Subdivision Bill
—Beet-root Sugar Bill.—

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.



#### [Ocr. 29

#### SECOND READINGS.

Codlin Moth Bill, Timber-floating Bill, River Boards Bill.

THIRD READINGS.
Road Boards Bill, Codlin Moth Bill, Life Assurance Policies Bill, Electric Lines Bill.

#### GOLD FIELDS.

Mr. PYKE asked the Government, If they will inform this House what course they will pursue in reference to the recommendations of the Gold Fields and Mines Committee in regard to the proposals of Professor Black, and the utilizing of the services of Professor Ulrich?

Mr. BALLANCE replied that the Government proposed to place a sum upon the supplementary estimates for the purpose of carrying out the recommendations of the Committee.

#### BEE-KEEPING.

Mr. HAMLIN asked the Government, If they will take the necessary steps for protecting the bee-keeping industries of the colony by placing an import ad valorem duty upon all honey imported into New Zealand, and, further, by allowing all apiarian appliances and bee-keepers' sundries to be admitted into the

colony free of Customs duty?

Mr. STOUT had stated several times this session that it would be impossible to alter the Customs tariff this year. He found that in some colonies there was an import duty on honey. In Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, and Western Australia they imposed an import duty on honey. In New South Wales and South Australia there was no import duty. to the apiarian appliances, he understood that these were being made in the colony, and in that case he did not see why they should be imported.

#### ALEXANDRA LOCK-UP.

Mr. PYKE asked the Minister of Justice, If the Government will cause the lock-up recently burnt down at Alexandra South, and the constable's residence adjacent thereto, to be rebuilt of stone, without unnecessary delay?

Mr. TOLE replied that there seemed to be a necessity for a lock-up and police-station at Alexandra South, and the Government would take steps to reinstate those buildings, but he could not say of what material they would be constructed.

#### MANAWATU TIMBER TRADE.

Mr. MACARTHUR asked the Minister for Public Works,—(1.) Whether he is aware that arrangements are being made to float logs down the Wanganui River to the mills in Wanganui, in consequence of the prohibitive tariff and mode of measurement adopted by the railway authorities on the Foxton-New Plymouth Railway? (2.) Whether he is aware that, in consequence of the authorities on that railway having adopted a new mode of measurement, large contracts for the supply from Manawatu and delivery of logs in Wanganui had to be given up, and that a large carrying trade was

thus lost to the Railway Department? (3.) Whether, in order to renew such trade, the Government will modify the tariff, and alter the mode of measurement to that formerly used? He did not mean that a new mode of measurement had been invented by the railway authorities. They simply altered the custom that had hitherto prevailed on the railway. He was quite willing to admit that the existing arrangement might give the cubic measurement of a log more accurately than the mode formerly adopted; but, owing to the alteration, several large contracts had to be given up in the Manawatu, and thus a loss was entailed on the department. The effect of the alteration in the mode of measurement was practically to raise the tariff. He would ask the Minister for Public Works whether he would revert to the old mode of measurement, so as to enable the Railway Department to get the benefit of the carrying trade, and the saw-miller to develop the timber industry

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that the Government had no information as to logs being floated down the Wanganui River. The bush on the railway from which timber was carried to Wanganui was from fifty to sixty miles away from the river, and was unaffected by it. It was not true that a prohibitive tariff heen introduced. No changes had been made recently; but of late years very large reductions in the rate had been introduced. For instance, in 1878 logs could have been carried at 3s. 5d. per 100ft. for 60 miles: now they could be carried at 2s. 6d., and white-pine logs at 2s., per 100ft. The Railway Department had not introduced a new system of measurement. The system was one giving the correct quantities. The saw-millers tried to introduce a fictitious measure, but were stopped. He could not recommend modifying the tariff sufficiently to secure this traffic even if the representations made as to the floating of timber down to Wanganui were correct.

#### KUMARA-GOLDSBOROUGH TELE-PHONE.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Commissioner of Telegraphs, If he will take the necessary steps to have telephonic communication established between Kumara and Goldsborough? He might state that the ordinary telegraph wires were there already, and only one wire was required to complete the connection between Kumara and Goldsborough. At the present time com-munications had to go to Hokitika, a distance of twenty miles, and back from Hokitika to Goldsborough, another distance of fifteen miles. A wire for a distance of five miles would complete the connection.

Sir J. VOGEL was unable to see what advantage there would be in this work, to com-pensate for the cost. Kumara was now in pensate for the cost. Kumara was now in communication with Hokitika, as was also Goldsborough. It could make no possible difference to persons who wished to communicate between Kumara and Goldsborough that they had to do so by Hokitika, as the cost would be the same. In the course of time, when the population became very large, communication might be extended between Kumara and Goldstorough. Whilst the telephone was a substitute for the telegraph line, he hardly thought the expense was worth incurring.

#### CANTERBURY LICENSES.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked the Minister of Lands, When the return of licenses to occupy issued, in the Canterbury Provincial District, for lands for which the Crown grants have not been issued—ordered under resolution of this House on the 1st instant—will be laid before the House?

Mr. BALLANCE replied that the return was more complicated and formidable than was expected. Its preparation would entail a good deal of expense, and he did not think it could be prepared this session.

#### J. R. CLEMENT.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked the Minister of Lands, Whether he will place the sum of £80 on the supplementary estimates to give effect to the recommendation of the Waste Lands Committee upon the petition of J. R. Clement?

Mr. BALLANCE replied that there would be no objection to give effect to the report of the Committee on this case; but it must be understood that, if the money was not expended before the end of the financial year, it would not be revoted.

# WAIHEKE TELEPHONE AND COROMANDEL WHARF.

Mr. W. F. BUCKLAND asked the Government, Whether they will, during the recess, cause inquiries to be made as the desirability and cost of connecting the important Island of Waiheke by telephone with the mainland; and also whether they will ascertain the cost of erecting a suitable wharf in the Coromandel Passage?

Sir J. VOGEL hardly thought that the cost of connecting Waiheke by telephone with the mainland would be justified at present. As to the erection of a wharf in the Coromandel Passage, he had permission from the Minister for Public Works to say that, whilst that was a matter which would have consideration, he did not see any immediate necessity for the work.

## EAST AND WEST COAST RAILWAY. Mr. McMILLAN asked the Minister for Pub-

lic Works, When the reports of the survey of the East and West Coast Railway, and maps and sections giving the result of these surveys, will be laid before this House, as promised in the Public Works Statement?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the reports referred to were being collected and printed, and would, he hoped, be available in the course of a few days.

#### HASTINGS WOOL TRAFFIC.

Mr. ORMOND asked the Minister for Public Works, If he is aware that most of the extensive wool traffic that used to be done by the railway from Hastings to Napier is now being done

by horse-drays? It had come to his knowledge that there was this year a very large divergence of traffic from the railway at Hastings, and he should be glad to hear that some steps would be taken to prevent a continuance of this.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said that, since this question was put on the Order Paper, he had caused inquiries to be made on the subject, and, as far as he had at present ascertained, there was not likely to be any great loss this year. However, if it should turn out that, by a small reduction of the 'rates, the revenue would benefit, he would see that this course should be adopted; but he might point out that the danger was that, if a reduction were made on this short length, it would probably affect the whole tariff in such a way as to cause to the department a loss which would not be met by the gain from this particular part of the

#### FIELD'S TRACK.

Mr. BRYCE asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether, with a view to facilitate the construction of the railway, the Government will consider the necessity of opening as a traffic road the line known as Field's Track, between the Makirikiri Valley and the North Island Trunk Railway-line, at ninety-five miles from Marton? He should like to explain to the Minister for Public Works that he put this question on account of the peculiar position of this proposed railway. The honourable member was aware that the country through which this railway would pass was entirely unopened at present by roads, with the exception of cer-tain bridle-tracks. He (Mr. Bryce) understood that on the estimates a very considerable sum of money was allocated for the purpose of roadmaking, to facilitate the construction of the railway, and therefore he called attention to this particular track.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON thanked the honourable member for bringing this matter under his notice. Since he had replied to the honourable member for Rangitikei on a somewhat similar subject, he had gathered further information, and it was to the effect that the road known as Murray's Track was much more likely to be made use of in connection with the construction of the railway. He understood that the track known as Field's Track was not likely to be utilized in the same direction, for that part of the line which would be served by this track could be much better served—so far as the supply of contractors' stores went — by a track from Napier. Of course the matter was at present only in an embryo state, and would have to be carefully looked into before any expenditure was authorized.

#### KUMARA WATER-RACES.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Minister of Mines, Whether it is true that the manager of the Kumara Main Tail-race and Water-races wrote a letter, dated the 26th October, 1883, addressed to the Hon. the Minister of Mines, in which letter the Manager stated that all parties connecting with the Government tail-race over and above twenty-four were told at the time

they made their application that, if they constructed any more tail-races to the channel, they would do so at their own risk, no guarantee being given them that they would be allowed the use of the channel? Will the Minister direct the Warden to hold an inquiry into the matter should any of the aggrieved parties, in writing, request such inquiry? His reasons for asking the question were these: Earlier in the year the late honourable member for Hokitika and himself had brought under the notice of the Government what they considered was a very great hardship that was endured by a certain number of men at work on the Kumara Gold Field. Since then the House had ordered the correspondence relating to the subject to be laid upon the table; but from that correspondence there were two or three letters absent. He had called attention to this, and since then the Minister had courteously supplied him with a copy of this correspondence; and therefore, as to the first part of the question, the answer would be in the affirmative. He held in his hand what purported to be a copy of the letter referred to in the question, and it ran as

"SIR, — In reply to your telegram of the 23rd instant, I have the honour to make the

following remarks :-

"You have been made aware from time to time of the very ill feeling existing between the parties of miners holding the high- and those holding the low-numbered rights to the use of the sludge-channel. You will also remember a protest being lodged against a renewal of expired permits, which matter has not yet been settled.

"Since the days have shortened, this ill feeling has gradually grown stronger on the part of the high-numbered men, because those holding the first rights to the use of the channel have refused to work three-hour shifts instead of four-hour, as at present, which would have enabled all of them to get a turn. This refusal to agree to four three-hour shifts instead of three four-hour shifts showed those holding the high-numbered permits how hopeless their chances were of getting what they considered a fair share of the use of the channel and tailing-site while it is available.

"As days and weeks passed away in idleness, these men became desperate, and, being dunned by storekeepers and others, they resolved to do something to bring about a change of some kind—any change would place them in a better position. As the question of the renewal of expired permits was not settled, they threatened to bring before the Warden a test case, which it was thought would place them in a better position in the channel. The eight parties whose original permits had expired, and the eight others whose permits will expire on the 1st June, became alarmed, and therefore resolved to conciliate the 'outsiders' in some way, to prevent the threatened 'test' case coming before the Warden. It was therefore suggested that they should all agree and pull together to bring about a change, by which the channel could be made to accom-

modate all; but, in order to do this, it was necessary to draw up petitions and make a noise at public meetings. As the reduction was a popular 'move,' it was no doubt brought forward for several reasons—namely, large meetings and unanimity in opinion when resolutions were put. It also enabled one or two persons to take the lead and air their eloquence, and to show how they always were ready and willing to fight the miners' battles; therefore fault was found with the Manager for having lately reduced the number of parties in each shift from eight to seven. This reduction was attributed to the stone paving, and, as Mr. Seddon put it, 'culpable mismanagement.'

"Although stone paving is much used by the miners, they, very inconsistently, condemn its use in the channel. They also find fault with the patching done when blocks are carried away, but they carefully avoid saying anything about the large stones causing the blocks to be carried away. The miners think the most effectual remedy to cure this 'mismanagement,' by which all the claims would be enabled to sluice into the channel, is to force the Government to at once replace the stone paving and wood blocks with cast-iron plates of suitable size and thickness; and, in order to have this done quickly, and make it more cortain, an inquiry is necessary to enable 'experts'—their number is legion on this field

—to give evidence.

"I should now state, for your information, that, since many of the claims—eighteen—have been well opened out, they are enabled to sluice away a much larger quantity of débris in a shift than they did a short time ago. Consequently, the channel is now not equal to more than seven parties each shift. A few months ago it worked eight and nine parties, with from eight to ten heads. This extra quantity of water was found to be necessary before the 14-inch stone paving was placed in the channel. The stone paving, however, does lessen the carrying capacity of the channel, because it cannot possibly be made as smooth as the wood paving. This is really the principal cause of dissatisfaction and complaint, especially since it has been made known that the channel is not to be widened.

"The miners holding the outside numbers in the channel are very much displacatened, and take a most gloomy view of their prospects, because they see very plainly how remote their chances are of ever being able to properly work their claims, pay their debts, or hold their ground, and plant thereon. Those holding the first rights to the channel say truly that, unfortunately, there are more parties requiring the use of the channel than it will accommodate, and, as they had faith in the channel answering the purpose for which it was constructed by risking their money and labour to test it, those outside of the numbers which the channel can conveniently accommodate have no legal or equitable right to interfere with them. They also argue that, the Mines Department having been

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made aware of the fact that the channel could not accommodate all the parties, it should have been widened, or - what might have answered the same purpose—'paved with castiron blocks.' In order to overcome these omissions and difficulties for a time, and when the long summer days were approaching, I suggested four three-hour shifts.

"This matter was discussed by the miners at several meetings, but they were nearly equally divided for and against. As they were aware, for the proper and safe working of the races, it must necessarily be unanimous, this temporary

remedy did not get a trial.

"As several of the claims do not take water every day, I am enabled to accommodate on an average from twenty-three to twenty-six during the month, by making three shifts of four hours With more than that number on at one time the channel is very apt to overflow, which I am most anxious to prevent just now, in order to keep the side trams clear of debris, which would prevent the side straps and planking lately authorized being put on.

"I am blamed by Mr. Seddon for the stone paving, and for having started 25 chains from the lower end, instead of starting it at the top end. The fact is, I could not procure the stone in quantity at any reasonable cost any-where near the top end, or even nearer the middle than I did. I started to get the stone where it was most plentiful, and where the greatest amount of wear in the channel was taking place, intending to procure stone higher up the field when it could be conveniently got in any quantity near the shafts available.

"I have a quantity of stone now in the channel near the top end, which is being fixed in position from time to time as the wood blocks wear out. I cannot, however, get any more stone to this part of the channel, because the miners are washing away the shaft I used to

"At one of the public meetings lately held Mr. Seddon produced what purported to be a section of the sludge-channel, and, as I understood, gave a section of the 14-in. stone paving joining the 8-inch wood blocks, and the stone paving was made to appear to dip against the

"The fact is, the sloped stone paving from the 8-in. wood blocks to the 14-in. stones, a length of 28ft., has a fall in that distance of 1.09ft., equal to nearly 13in. I must, however, state that, when the 14-in. stone paving was first put in, nearly all the blockages for a few days took place at this particular spot, for which I made some allowance when the stoppages extended over an hour. As some of the miners admitted that the channel had been abused, I argued that they should bear some of the loss. Blockages on the stone paving do not often take

"I think Mr. Seddon's section of the channel -which he said he would forward to Wellington-shows some stone paving near the tail end of the channel. This will be the experimental paving done when Mr. Gordon was last here, and, although some parts of it have been car-

ried away at various times, some of it still remains in position, not yet worn out. This part of the channel does not choke or block.

"I think I should mention that the parties having permits numbered from about twentyfour upwards were told, at the time they made their application, that if they constructed any more tail-races to the channel they would do so at their own risk. No guarantee was given them that they would be allowed the use of the channel.

"Notwithstanding my warnings, they have constructed tail-races, flumes, and water-wheels, at considerable outlay of money and labour; and now argue that, as the channel is public property, they have a right to use it, and that it should be made to accommodate them.

"If an inquiry be made into the working of the channel, nearly every miner having a permit will expect to be allowed, as an expert, to give his opinion on the matter, which can be summed up in a few words—namely, iron blocks and widening the channel.

#### "The Price of Water.

"Although there are very many claims in this field well able to pay the present rate for water, there are a few others so poor that, after paying all working expenses and a few pounds on account of old liabilities incurred during the past eighteen months or two years, I think there is often a very small margin to divide. I know, however, with few exceptions, the claims are gradually reducing the amount of their liabilities, and the holders speak hopefully of their claims ultimately paying their debts and ordinary wages.

"There are, however, some very doubtful claims, requiring some aid from the race to enable them to be thoroughly tested. I will act as instructed in your memorandum of the 15th instant, by assisting all urgent cases as may seem necessary. This should, I think, at present, meet the case, instead of reducing the charge where parties are doing well enough to

pay present charge.
"A reduction in the price would no doubt make matters more pleasant for me and all others on the field; but I would like to give the claims now opened or opening a further trial, say, another six months, which would enable me more correctly to estimate the value of the many claims on this field.

"In conclusion, I think I should state the great noise made here lately is caused by a few only, and that the local paper represents one side only; it does not publish all that is said at the meetings, especially what is said in my favour. As a rule, much that is said by Mr.

Seddon is not published.

"Mr. Seddon, at one of the late meetings, said 'he had the greatest respect for me, and no ill-feeling whatever; 'but before he finished his speech he accused me of 'deliberate mur-To do this he had to give a history of the sludge-channel.—I have, &c.,

"J. Gow, Manager.

"The Under-Secretary for Gold Fields, "Wellington."

It would therefore be seen that the contention maintained by the honourable member for Hokitika and himself was upheld by the documentary evidence in possession of the department. But these men denied that they had been told anything of the kind; and, as he represented both sides of the question, he asked whether the Minister would direct the Warden to hold an inquiry into the matter.

Mr. BALLANCE said, as to the first part of the question, the honourable gentleman had answered that himself. With regard to the second part of the question, he might say that the Warden and the Inspecting Engineer had already held an inquiry, and their report was in possession of the Government, and would be shown to the honourable gentleman, if he desired to see it.

Mr. SEDDON said the phase of the question to which he referred was not covered by that inquiry. The inquiry had reference to prior-right men; but it was the non-prior-right men who said that injustice was done to them, seeing they denied having been warned by the Manager, as stated by him in the letter.

#### GOLD-DUTY ABOLITION.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Minister of Mines, If he will give effect to the recommendation of the Gold Fields Committee on the Petition of Ambrose Creber and others, in which petitioners pray for the abolition of the gold duty? The Government had made a statement as to their intentions in reference to this matter when the Gold Duty Reduction Bill came up for second reading on Thursday night; but, as these petitioners had approached Parliament, and as their petition was reported on favourably by the Gold Fields Committee, they were entitled to a reply.

Mr. BALLANCE said the House was already

Mr. BALLANCE said the House was already in possession of the intention of the Government in regard to this question. He might say, in a word, that the Government would not recede from the position it had taken up of dealing with the matter next session in a way that would as far as possible give effect to the compromise which had been arrived at.

#### KUMARA TAIL-RACE.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Minister of Mines, If he will give effect to the recommendation of the Gold Fields Committee on the petition of George Mansfield, John White, and others, in which petitioners pray for relief in connection with non-renewal of permits and regulations made in connection with the Kumara Main Tail-race? This question was covered somewhat by the correspondence which he had read. The Gold Fields Committee had recommended a certain course to be adopted, and he should be thankful to hear from the Minister that he had made provision to relieve these men from the grievances under which they suffered. He would also point out that the regulations now in force expired on the 1st of next month, a temporary renewal only having been given up to the 1st November, and it was with a view of having the objectionable clauses of the present

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regulations abrogated that he asked this question.

Mr. BALLANCE was understood to say that it was the intention of the Government to alter the regulations, but the Government did not intend to renew permits.

#### W. MORRIS AND OTHERS.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Minister of Mines. If he will give effect to the recommendation of the Gold Fields Committee on the petition of William Morris and others, in which petitioners seek to have the price of water reduced which is purchased by them from the Government? He might mention that two or three parties of men had left their claims and had applied for protection orders, and the reason for which they made this application to the Warden was that the ground was too poor to allow of their paying the price at present charged for water. He thought that power might be given to the Manager to reduce the price of water, and to also grant free water in certain cases. He had asked this question because the price of water was exorbitant, and relief should be given. He desired to put this protest on record, so that petitioners might see he had not been wanting in his duty to them in bringing their case before the House.

Mr. BALLANCE said he did not think the miners could suppose the honourable gentleman did not look after their interests. The Government, however, did not see their way to give water, or to make any general reduction. The honourable member would recognize that these works did not yield anything like a fair percentage on the cost of their construction. The Government would, however, be disposed to give the General Manager power to make reductions in cases where they were specially and urgently required.

#### KUMARA WATER-RACE.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Minister of Mines, If he will give effect to the recommendation of the Gold Fields Committee on the petition of the Borough Council of Kumara, in which petitioners pray for a reduction in the price of water charged to miners taking water from the Kumara Water-race? He presumed the answer to this question would be the same as that to the previous question. He thanked the Minister for the concession of free water to poor claims, but would have much preferred a general reduction.

Mr. BALLANCE said the reply would be the same.

#### CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACT.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN asked the Government, Whether, during the recess, they will take steps to obtain all possible information as to the working of the Contagious Diseases Act in those countries where it is in force; such information to be procured from reliable official sources and the best medical testimony? He might state that in the session of 1883 he had put a similar question to the then Colonial Secretary, who promised that full information

should be obtained and placed before the House. He had not seen any information yet, and therefore he renewed the question.

Mr. TOLE said that the Government had already acquired a considerable amount of information on this subject from the Agent-General.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN.—Is there any respecting New Zealand?
Mr. TOLE.—Yes; I believe so.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN.-Will the information be placed before the House?

Mr. TOLE replied that he would consider that.

DISTRICT RAILWAYS.

The following motion was called on: "That this House will, to-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider the following resolution: 'That the difficulties surrounding the railways constructed under the District Railways Act, and the hardships to which the ratepayers are subjected in connection therewith, are such that this House considers the Government should seize a favourable opportunity to enter into agreements to acquire the said lines by lease and purchase; the cost not to exceed the value ascertained by a Court of inquiry, presided over by a Judge of the Supreme Court, based on the actual cost at which, at the time of construction, the railways could have been constructed, less the depreciation and deterioration since construction from a reduction in the market value of materials and wear and tear, plus any amounts the company-owners of the said railways have been or may be authorized to levy on the ratepayers up to the 31st March last; it being made a condition that all proceedings against ratepayers shall be stopped, and all amounts received from ratepayers be returned to them. The Government to have the option, up to one week after the next session of Parliament, to pay for the railways by 4-per-cent. rent-purchase bonds, or by a payment of one-third in cash; the balance to bear 4 per cent. interest, and to be paid in four equal annual instalments. The Government next session, in the event of such agreement, to introduce a Bill to make the ratepayers liable for one-half of any amount short of 4 per cent. which the railways yield after paying working expenses, plus the cost of raising the rates.'"

Sir J. VOGEL.—Sir, I am glad to be able to announce that the Government has resolved to propose these resolutions in a manner that will not be open to any discussion on the ground of actual or implied conflict with the Legislative Council. For convenience' sake I have had the resolution as amended printed, and it will now

be distributed among honourable members.

Mr. BRYCE.—Do I understand that the honourable gentleman proposes now to go on with the discussion of the amended motion?

Sir J. VOGEL.—I think that the usual and convenient course would be for me to explain, in a few words, the object of the resolution; and that the House should, as a matter of course, agree that we should to-morrow consider the resolution in Committee. It is not

usual to discuss resolutions of this kind in the: House unnecessarily. Of course it will be open for members, if they desire it, to raise a. discussion in the House; but I would ask the House for leave to substitute this resolution. for the one on the Paper.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The question is, That the

Colonial Treasurer have leave to substitute the following resolution, in place of the resolution on the Paper: "That this House will, to-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider the following resolution: 'That the difficulties surrounding the railways constructed under the District Railways Act,. and the hardships to which the ratepayers are subjected in connection therewith, are such. that this House considers the Government should seize a favourable opportunity to enter into agreements to acquire the said lines by lease and purchase: such agreements to be subject to the ratification of Parliament, and to contain a provision that, until Parliament. has had an opportunity of giving such ratification, all proceedings against ratepayers shall be stopped.''

Leave refused.

Mr. SPEAKER.—As there are one or twodissentient voices, I cannot put the resolution in the amended form.

Sir G. GREY.—I have not had time to consider this resolution. I think some time should be given.

Colonel TRIMBLE.—It appears to me the proper course would be to ask leave to withdraw the motion on the Paper, and then give notice in the ordinary way.

Mr. STOUT.—Speaking to the point of order, as one or two honourable members have not. seen fit to extend the usual courtesy to the Government, I shall not ask leave, but shall move the resolution as an amendment afterwards.

Mr. BRYCE.—I should like the Treasurer to understand that I am not doing this out of any discourtesy. I think, if he considers the question, he will see that it is not a question of courtesy or discourtesy. When the original motion was put upon the Paper I made up my mind to raise a question of order which I consider of some importance, and I informed the Premier that I intended to do so. When the question was called on, it was withdrawn, and an altogether new motion was substituted for it. I did not know how far this new motion might affect the argument that I was prepared to adduce on the question of order. Similarly, to-day I wanted to raise a question of order on the motion as it appeared on the Paper. Then, at the very moment the question was being called on, I was suddenly told that that is not the question, but something else new to me is to be the question. How can I apply argument to a thing I do not know anything about? It is not a question of courtesy or discourtesy at all, as far as that is concerned.

Sir J. VOGEL.—Speaking to the point of order, it is a practice in some Legislatures, I think-notably in the American one-for members to be allowed to put prepared speeches. in Hansard, or in the equivalent for Hansard, without speaking in the House at all. If I understand the honourable gentleman's objection rightly, he has prepared a speech for the resolution on the Paper—

District Railways.

resolution on the Paper—
Mr. SPEAKER.—I do not think the honourable member, the Colonial Treasurer, is in

order

Sir J. VOGEL.—I will confine myself to what the honourable gentleman said as to giving notice to the Premier that he would raise a point of order upon the resolution as it stands on the Order Paper. I was not aware of his intention, and it was with no desire to disappoint him that the alteration was made. The alteration was made because the Government considered it was a more desirable motion to submit to the House; and it appears to me, notwithstanding what preparation may have been made with regard to the motion on the Order Paper, it is a matter of ordinary courtesy to allow the Government to move the motion in the way in which they desire to do so. If any honourable gentleman chooses to say "No," of course we can move it as it stands, and get another Minister to move the amend-ment. But it is such an unusual thing to deny the Government the opportunity of making a correction, especially when they have gone to the trouble, for the convenience of honourable members, to have it printed, that I really am at a loss to understand how such a refusal can be maintained. Still, any honourable member is within his right in saying "No;" and, if that is decided, I will proceed with the motion as it stands.

Sir G. GREY.—What I wish to represent is this: that, first of all, there were cries close to me of a very unfair nature to hurry this on. There was at once a cry of "Aye," and an evident intention to hurry, which confused me. Secondly, I can see that this is a totally different motion from that on the Order Paper. mean, it is not an amendment, but an entirely different motion. It is a matter of very great importance; I have not nad time to consider it; and, I submit, it is not fair to propose a motion of this kind without time being given to consider it. I see that an agreement is to be made, and a provision put into it of a peculiar kind which makes it operative, in part, the moment the agreement is made, and yet not wholly operative till Parliament has again met. I shall certainly, if I can by any legitimate means, object to this motion being put until I have had full time to consider its bearings. I did not get I did not get this put into my hand until after the motion had been put. I was unusually late in having it put into my hand. I say it is not fair, by cries in the House or by other means, to attempt to hurry us to a decision. I shall resist that, as most improper, and resist it to the ut-most of my privileges as a member of Parliament.

Sir J. VOGEL.—Sir, may I now proceed on the lines of the Order Paper?

the lines of the Order Paper?

Mr. SPEAKER.—Yes. If there is an objection to allowing the motion to be put in an a Bill. I take it, therefore, that, the House

amended form, of course it can be moved in the form in which it stands on the Paper. Generally, I may say that any resolutions, such as this, of a financial nature are almost bound to be discussed in Committee of the Whole, and not in the House. The ordinary rule is to take the whole discussion on financial proposals in Committee.

Mr. BRYCE.—I do not intend to discuss the constitutional question at all, or to enter into any question largely. I simply want to raise a technical question of parliamentary procedure. I may say to the Treasurer that it will be some considerable time before I again appeal to his sense of justice, because I see he is so eager to utter a sneer against a political opponent that such an appeal falls upon unwilling ears. I have no set speech prepared; but I will raise the question of order at once, and in very few words. I take it that the substance of this resolution is a matter that has already been discussed and determined by this It, in fact, embodies the enacting proposals of a Bill which was discussed in this House called the District Railways Leasing and Purchasing Bill. That has been determined, not only by this House, but by the Legislative Council. It is, however, to the decision of this House that I wish to refer in now raising the question of order. If you will refer to May's "Parliamentary Practice," Ninth Edition, page 328, you will find there these words:

"It is a rule in both Houses not to permit any question or Bill to be offered which is substantially the same as one on which their judgment has already been expressed in the current session. This is necessary in order to avoid contradictory decisions, to prevent surprises, and to afford proper opportunities for determining the several questions as they arise. If the same question could be proposed again and again, a session would have no end, or only one question could be determined; and it would be resolved first in the affirmative and then in the negative, according to the accidents to which

all voting is liable."

Now, I am aware that it has been argued that there is a distinction between a question and a Bill; but I take it that the whole context of this paragraph shows that it is the matter which is referred to, whether that matter be contained in a question or in a Bill. It is the matter which is the essential thing, and according to our parliamentary practice it ought not to be debated again and again, for the reasons given. It is evident that, although a question may not be a Bill, still a Bill is always a question. In fact, the very form in which you, Sir, put it from the chair shows that a Bill must be a question, for you put it, "The question is," and so on. The reason given in the concluding portion of the paragraph is conclusive; for, "if the same question could be proposed again and again, a session would have no end." That shows clearly that it is the matter which is referred to, whether that matter be contained in a question or in a Bill. I take it, therefore, that, the House

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having considered and decided upon the matter now before the House, it is not competent now to put that question from the chair. Again, I find it laid down that "a mere alteration of the words of a question, without any substantial change in its object, will not be sufficient to evade this rule." I take it that, in this case, although there has been an alteration in the words, yet substantially the matter of the question has been discussed and determined by the House this session, and, if so, the question cannot again be put from the chair. Isubmit these points for your consideration, Sir, as it is an important matter of procedure and precedent, which requires to be carefully determined. I submit, also, that it is not out of any discourtesy to the honourable gentleman that I have raised the question, but because it is one of great importance to be determined.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I have given my best consideration to this subject, and I hope my opinion will not be considered too fine-drawn. I consider that this House transacts its business in two ways, either by motions or by Bills; and the rule of Parliament is that, if a motion is disposed of, it cannot be discussed again. Similarly, if a Bill is disposed of, another Bill substantially the same cannot be introduced during the same session. But, referring to the very chapter to which the honourable member has called attention, he will find a recent instance where the House of Commons determined a question in one way by motion, and yet a few days afterwards it allowed a Bill to be brought in dealing with the question in the opposite manner. Therefore I consider that, although we could not allow a second Bill of a like nature to be brought in dealing with the subject, still there is this precedent for a motion relating to the same subject being allowed to be introduced. The instance is this:

"On the 5th March, 1872, a resolution was moved, impugning the general operation of 'The Elementary Education Act, 1870,' and enumerating several points in which it failed, including the payment of school fees to de-nominational schools. In opposition to it, an amendment was carried affirming that it was too soon to review the provisions of the Act. On the 23rd April Mr. Candlish brought forward a motion for leave to bring in a Bill to repeal the 25th clause of the Education Act, which authorized the payment of school fees to de-nominational schools. Exception was taken to his motion on the ground that, substantially, it had been embraced in the resolution of the 5th March, and excluded from consideration by the amendment. But it was held that a resolution in terms so general could not prevent a member from moving for leave to bring in a Bill to repeal a single clause of the Act."

The House of Commons determined one day by a motion that it was too soon to review the provisions of the Education Act, and yet within a very few days after it allowed a Bill to repeal a very important portion of that Act to be introduced. We are taking the converse of that course, and, a measure passed by this House having been rejected elsewhere, we proceed to express our opinion on the subject of the Bill by means of a motion.

District Railways.

Mr. STOUT. — I may give an instance in point in what occurred last session, when a Bill was introduced, by the Ministry of which the honourable gentleman was a member, to pro-vide for an inquiry by Waste Lands Boards into cases of supposed "dummyism." The Bill containing that provision was thrown out in the other House, and the Government intro-duced a new Bill containing all the provisions

except those which were objected to.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—That case is by no means parallel. The principle laid down in

May is very distinct:

"When a Bill which has been passed in one House and sent to the other is there rejected, it is according to parliamentary usage that 'a new Bill of the same matter may be drawn and begun again in that House whereunto it was sent; and such Bill, being passed in the House in which it is begun, and sent to the other, may be there proceeded upon and passed."

The principle is this, as I understand it: that, when a House rejects a Bill for certain provisions in the Bill which it disapproves, though it may not disapprove of the remaining pro-visions, it is competent to it to lay that Bill aside, and then to entertain a new Bill based on the provisions which it does not disapprove. The principle in the case before us—and I am speaking altogether apart from your ruling on the technical point, Sir—is, whether we are entitled, by a side-wind or in any other way, to counteract the decision arrived at by the other branch of the Legislature. The question which was brought before this House was rejected by the other House, and this resolution purports to set aside that decision by a sidewind. In fact, we are asked to sanction the entering-into of a contract which the other branch of the Legislature, when appealed to, has said ought not to be entered into. The principle, as I understand it, is this: that, when a certain course of policy is based upon an enactment, that enactment, proceeding as it does from both branches of the Legislature, can only be modified or set aside by both branches of the Legislature. Of course a contract is nothing less than an initiatory step, and means undoubtedly the spending of money; and this contract the other branch of the Legislature has said shall not be entered into. It seems to me that the course we are invited to take is really an evasion of the general principles stated by my honourable friend the member for Waitotara—that, when a question has once been under consideration and disposed of, it should not be reopened during the same session. There are no doubt a number of precedents which show that that principle has been established and acted on. I may refer to the question of the paper duties :-

"In 1860 the Commons determined to balance the ways and means for the service of the year by increasing the property-tax and stamp duties and repealing the duties on paper.

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The increased taxation had already received the assent of Parliament, when the Lords rejected the Paper Duties Repeal Bill, and thus overruled the financial arrangements voted by the Commons. That House was naturally sensitive to this novel encroachment upon its peculiar privileges; but—as the Lords had exercised a legal right, and their vote was irrevocable during that session -- it was judiciously resolved, after full inquiry and consideration, to maintain the privileges of the House, not by vain remonstrances, but by the assertion of its paramount authority in the imposition and repeal of taxes, in a manner at once dignified and practical.'

Then, resolutions were passed in the Commons, over which there was considerable discussion, as to the right of the Lords to interfere with taxation; and the resolutions—passed at the instance of Lord Palmerston-were somewhat contradictory; but the principle was never set aside that, during the same session, no step could be taken which would infringe a

decision of the Lords :-

"Next session they included the repeal of these duties in a general financial measure for granting the property-tax, tea and sugar duties, and other ways and means for the service of the year, which the Lords were constrained to accept. The financial scheme was presented for acceptance or rejection as a whole, and in that form the privileges of the Commons were secure; and the budget of each year has since been comprised in a general or composite Act."

Now, Sir, our contention is that the House is attempting to set aside a decision of the Upper House in an indirect way by authorizing a contract to be entered into. Then, there is another point, which I think it is fair to bring before the House, and it is one of the first importance to a branch of the Legislature which has a voice in this matter, and that is the Governor; and I say that the whole of the precedents on this subject show that the Governor would not be justified in entering into a contract at variance with the decision arrived at by the Legislative Council. The instructions are extremely distinct. It was in respect of the Darling grant:-

"The Queen's representative ought not to be made the instrument of enabling one branch of the Legislature to coerce the other; and he therefore ought not again to recommend the vote to the acceptance of the Legislature under the 57th article of the Constitution Act, except on a clear understanding that it will be brought before the Legislative Council in a manner which will chable them to exercise their discretion respecting it without the necessity of throwing the colony into confusion."

We do not know that this resolution is going to the Legislative Council as well. If the Government are going to send its resolution to the Council, there might possibly be something said in its favour; but I think the course we are entering upon by passing this resolution is a very dangerous one, and not in accord with precedent. There is another precedent—the

case of Mr. Palmer, which is given also in May. Mr. Palmer was a gentleman who had in consequence of plans for improved postal communication, got a grant of 23 per cent. for life on the net proceeds of the increase of postal revenue, which was equal to some £10,000 a year. A Bill was passed, in spite of the Government, to secure to him in the future, notwithstanding that he had been dismissed by the Government, this percentage for life. The Bill was rejected, the Govern-ment opposing it in the Lords. Then, resolution was passed proposing to give to him the arrears of the percentage, and a Bill was prepared for the purpose of giving the Lords an opportunity of considering the grant distinctly from other grants of the year. The Bill was dropped, and the Commons addressed the Prince Regent, the House assuring him that next year the Government would make good the contracts they would enter into. The Lords resented this; and the Prince Regent said he would give effect to the wishes of the Commons whenever the means should be provided by Parliament—that was, by a legislative Act which would receive the concurrence of both Houses. That case was only settled when both Houses agreed to a compromise, and a sum of money was voted under an enactment which both Houses had an opportunity of rejecting. I think myself that the proposition of the Government is an exceedingly unwise one, and I think it is creating a very bad precedent.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I understood the honourable member was speaking not so much on the point of order—whether the same subject could be considered twice in the same session - as whether this resolution on the Order Paper was constitutional. If this House, under this resolution as originally proposed, assumed to itself the power to expend the public money without any reference to the Legislative Council, it would be an unconstitutional question for me to propose from the chair; but I understand that the Government propose, by amendment, to remove all particulars of such an unconstitutional nature from it, and therefore I shall feel at liberty to propose such amendments from the chair.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD.—Speaking to the point of order, I would point out that there does seem to be a precedent during this present session of Parliament. I mean with regard to the Bill which passed this House proposing to abolish the gold duty. As it passed the House, the duty was to be abolished on a date fixed by the Governor in Council. That Bill was thrown out in another place. Subsequently a Bill was permitted to be introduced in this House, and was only accidentally prevented from being proceeded with — the Gold Duties Reduction Bill-one of the provisions of which was that the duty should absolutely cease in 1886. does appear to me that the question was similar to that which is now raised.

Mr. SPEAKER. — I do not consider the cases of the Gold Duties Bills as parallel with the case now under consideration. The first

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Bill, the Gold Duty Abolition Bill, proposed to abolish the gold duty on the 31st March next. The other Bill, the Gold Duty Reduction Bill, proposed to reduce the duty to onehalf the present rate on the 31st March next, and to abolish it altogether on the 31st March, 1886.

Sir J. VOGEL.—Sir, I think it would have been better, after the admirable remarks you made on the subject, that there should have been no further discussion; but, since the honourable member for Geraldine has thought it desirable to traverse your ruling, I will say this: that it does not seem to me

Mr. ROLLESTON. - I raised the constitutional question, apart from the technical

Sir J. VOGEL.—I understood, Sir, that you dealt with the constitutional question, and the honourable gentleman also raised the constitutional question, as to an antagonism with the Upper House in this resolution as it stands, apart from the question of dealing with a twice-dealt-with measure. One must look at these things not from too narrow a point of view; but, since the honourable gentleman thought it desirable not only to introduce the Legislative Council into this House, but to discuss the question whether His Excellency the Governor would be alive to the performance of his duties and instructions, I did not think it right to interrupt him, inadvisable as such a reference is on the question that has been raised. The Bill was thrown out by the other branch of the Legislature upon the avowed ground that it could not amend the Bill; and therefore you have to consider the ques-tion, whether this resolution is of precisely the same nature, or may not be in conformity with the desire of the Legislative Council that the measure may be dealt with in some modified form, the Bill having been thrown out expressly on the statement that it could not be amended. I want to know how you are to draw this line - how narrowly or how far. Does the honourable member for Geraldine mean to say that we must not deal with district railways at all this session, because the Bill was thrown out? The Bill which was thrown out was framed upon the basis that the agreements with the companies were final, and that the House had passed them, and was bound by them when the Bill passed. The resolution as it now stands, and more especially as it is amended, puts it on an entirely different footing, inasmuch as the House does not give its sanction at all to the agreements this session, but leaves them open for future consideration. The question is one that must be dealt with in some manner. Does the bonourable member mean to contend that, because the District Railways Bill does not find acceptance in another place, therefore the matter is not to be dealt with in another man-ner? It comes to this: that the amendment which the Government has brought down answers in three-fourths the objections raised by the honourable member for Geraldine to that part of the question which has not been settled by your ruling—namely, as to conflicts with the other House. If the House still refuses us permission to bring the motion on in the form we wish it, we shall propose it as it stands on the Order Paper, and my colleague will move an amendment. That is an inconvenient course, and is setting up a precedent that other Governments may find as inconvenient as we do ourselves.

District Railways.

Mr. BRYCE.—By way of explanation, Sir, I may say that I did not overlook the case you cited; but I thought it meant in its implication exactly the opposite of the view you took of it. It was held that a resolution in terms so general could not prevent a member from moving, and so on. I gather, from that, that if the resolution had been sufficiently specific it certainly would have prevented the honourable member from moving it. In the present case this resolution is almost a verbatim re-embodiment of the measure that was previously dealt with. However, Sir, I submit at once to your

ruling.
Mr. SPEAKER. — I do not dispute the general principle of the rule of Parliament that the honourable member for Waitotara quotes, and which I regard as essential to the conduct of the business of the session. But such rule, if invariably enforced and too strictly applied, might most seriously fetter the discretion of Parliament by rendering its decisions irrevocable for another year. I therefore feel constrained to adhere to the opinion I have

already given.
Mr. W. D. STEWART.—Speaking to the question of order: in an American book on parliamentary practice, by Cushing, the ruling which you have given seems to be in accordance with the practice there, founded on the practice in England. It is as follows:—
"(Section 2313.) The general rule being, as

already stated, that no question can be a second time moved upon which the judgment of the House has already been expressed, it follows not only that no resolution or Bill can be introduced which proposes to do what the House has declared shall not be done, but also that no two resolutions, nor any two Bills, contradictory to each other, can be passed in the same session, and consequently that no motion or proposition, preliminary to such contradictory legislation, can be regularly introduced."

It seems to be not an uncommon practice to bring in a resolution which may be carried unanimously, and subsequently to introduce a Bill giving effect to it, which may be rejected. The two modes of procedure seem to be distinct. The mere fact of a Bill being brought in to carry out what has been declared by resolution does not come within the rule as to introducing business in the same form. other words, not only the matter, but the form of procedure, must be similar. So long as we do not violate the rule against introducing in the same session a Bill in reversal of a decision already come to on a Bill, it does not

amount to any violation of the rule.

Mr. W. F. BUCKLAND.—I can see a great difference between a Bill and a motion. When

you move a motion, you merely affirm the principle. The Bill afterwards affirms that principle, and it goes to the Upper House. But when we pass a Bill in the first place, which is rejected by the Upper House, then I think we are degrading our legislation by moving a motion which does on a smaller scale that which was done by the Bill.

West Coast Settlement

Sir J. VOGEL.—Now that the atmosphere, which was considerably charged, has been cleared, we may consider this resolution without any ebullition of feeling-without importing into it any difficult or extraneous question. At any rate, my reference to the other House in the matter will be of the very smallest

amount.

Major ATKINSON .- Do I understand the honourable gentleman is going to debate the

question to-day?

Sir J. VOGEL.—I am altogether in the hands of the House. I understood it was the desire of the honourable member for Waitotara and other honourable members that the Government should state their reasons, and ask that a future day be appointed for going into Committee.

Mr. BRYCE.—I prefer that the debate should take place on a future day. I understand the honourable member himself prefers to adopt that course. We have not had notice of this new motion. If the honourable member moves it now as a matter of form, he can go more fully into the subject on a future occasion, and honourable members will then have a knowledge of the nature of the resolution which they have not now.

Sir J. VOGEL.-In compliance with the honourable gentleman's request, I will now merely move, That the House go into Committee of the Whole to-morrow to consider this resolution.

Motion agreed to.

WEST COAST SETTLEMENT RESERVES BILL.

On the question, That this Bill be read a

third time,

Mr. TE AO moved, That the Bill be recommitted, for the purpose of adding the following words to clause 4: "The Public Trustee shall not sell the land over which he has authority unless the Native owners of such land first consent to such sale."

Mr. BALLANCE said the Public Trustee had no power of sale; he was absolutely prohibited from selling the land; and therefore the amendment of the honourable gentleman was un-

necessary.
Mr. PERE thought the request of the honourable member for the Western Maori District was a reasonable one, because a great number of Acts were mentioned in this Bill. The whole of the former Acts had been incorporated in this measure. There was also provision made in this Bill for removing restrictions. If the Public Trustee had no power to sell this land, why should power be given him to remove restrictions? What was the object in having them removed? Although the Native Mr. W. F. Buckland

Minister had stated that the Public Trustee had no power of sale, still the Natives would like to see that clearly expressed in the Bill. Only a lawyer could know the real meaning of the terms used in the Bill. There were a great many references in the Bill to former Acts, of which the Natives did not know the meaning, and which might mislead them. said that the Public Trustee would have power to give the land. Now, that word had a very wide meaning. It might mean leasing, selling, exchanging, or something else. If the proposed amendment were made in the Bill, it would satisfy the Maoris.

Sir G. GREY would put it to the Native Minister whether there was anything objectionable in adding the words proposed by the honourable member for the Western Maori It was very difficult to tell what District. was the meaning of the Bill in several parts without reference to former Acts. It should be put in such a way that the Natives could

thoroughly understand it.

in the Bill in another place.

Mr. BALLANCE said it was absolutely certain that the Public Trustee had no power of sale. If the honourable member for the Western Maori District was very anxious to have the amendment made, it could be inserted

Mr. BRYCE pointed out that the insertion of the proposed words in the Bill might do harm even from the mover's own point of view. There was no power of sale at present, and, if words were added to the effect that the Public Trustee should not sell land without the consent of the owners, they might imply that the Public Trustee might sell with their con-

Bill read a third time.

## LAND BILL.

On the question, That the amendments made in Committee be agreed to,

Mr. ROLLESTON said he did not propose to make any opposition to agreement with the amendments, for he quite recognized that the sooner the Bill was sent up to another place the better; but he wished to point out that there were a number of clauses which would require amendment. He might refer particularly to clause 20, which dealt with valuations of improvements, and there were two or three others that required attention. Speaking generally, the Bill contained a good many useful provisions, and he was glad to see it passed. But he did not regard the Bill, nor did he suppose that the Minister of Lands regarded the Bill, as one which would give what the people wanted in the way of a more liberal land law. In respect of initiating a system of small pastoral leaseholds with perpetual tenure there was a great want in the Bill, and he hoped that the next Land Bill brought down would include clauses similar to those which were those clauses would be passed and become law, because he believed that that mode of settlement was very much desired throughout the country, and would be applicable to both



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Islands. He was quite sure that the Bill would | come down from the Council with a large number of technical amendments.

Mr. BALLANCE said he quite recognized the correctness of what the honourable member had said in reference to clause 20, and amendments would be proposed in that and other clauses. With regard to the Bill generally, it was far from coming up to his own standard of what the land law should be; but it had been impossible to do more this session. honourable member had recognized that there were some useful clauses in the Bill, and he (Mr. Ballance) had no doubt that the Bill would assist in the promotion of settlement.

Amendments agreed to, and Bill read a third time.

#### WELLINGTON COLLEGE RESERVES CONFIRMATION BILL.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. Mr. SEDDON had no further remarks to make on this Bill, as he understood a compromise had been arrived at, with which he was satisfied.

Mr. MACARTHUR said that, as it would be useless for a private member to oppose a Bill of this kind when taken up by the Government, he would not detain the House. Still, he must say that he did not agree to giving these reserves from the country for higher education, as that was a principle to which he had always been opposed.

Mr. SHRIMSKI said that, when the Bill had been before the House on a previous occasion, he had been reported as saying that he was opposed to higher education; but that was not by any means the case. His reason for opposing the Bill was that it took from a district that to which the district was entitled. No doubt these reserves had been set aside for higher education; but why should the City of Wellington be so greedy, and try to absorb to itself endowments which were made for the benefit of country districts? He would ask Mr. Speaker whether, the Bill having been introduced into another place by a private member, and dealing as it did with public lands, it was not a money Bill, and ought not therefore to have the consent of the Crown before it was introduced into the House.

Mr. SPEAKER could not say whether the honourable member who had introduced the Bill into the Legislative Council had received the consent of the Crown or not; but he could not hold that this was a money Bill.

Bill read a second time.

### WESTLAND EDUCATION DISTRICT SUB-DIVISION BILL.

On the motion, That this Bill be committed, Mr. MENTEATH said he wished to put before the House the real issue involved in this Bill. This was not a question of objecting to any particular clause; it was one of principle. The question involved was, whether it would be possible to carry on the present educational system in Westland or not. The Westland Education District was the smallest but one in

point of number of schools, and the smallest but two in point of number of scholars, in New Zealand. It was proposed by this Bill to subdivide that district-so small already that it could hardly stagger along under the expenses of management—into two smaller ones, involving, of course, greatly increased expenses of management. The Premier had said that he brought in this Bill in order to give effect to legislation of last session. It was quite true that a Bill was passed last session subdividing the Education District of Westland into two; but he ventured to think that the late Government, in helping to pass that Bill, had ground which was wanting to the present Government, in giving effect to it. When the Bill was passed last session the members of the House representing the two divisions of • the education district coincided in supporting the Bill, and the late Government apparently took it for granted that therefore it was only legitimate and giving effect to the wishes of the population that the Bill should pass into law. But a different state of things was before the House now. It was proposed to divide the Education District of Westland into north and south districts, and they had the representative of the southern portion asking them to give effect to the measure of last session, whilst the representative of the northern portion was as strongly opposed to effect being given to it. Under these circumstances, it would be only fair if the Premier would not push this Bill through the House, but would accede to the request made by the northern portion of the district on behalf of the inhabitants of the district. The Premier, in introducing the Bill, only said two things. said, first, that it was to give effect to the legis-lation of last session; and, secondly, that he exceedingly regretted to find that the people of Westland could not agree among themselves. That showed very plainly that the feeling of the Premier was not very strongly in favour of giving effect to the Act of last session. The Bill had one other advocate, and that was the honourable member for Kumara, who was strongly in favour of giving effect to the Act of 1883; and the reasons given by that honourable member he would deal with. The honourable gentleman first said that the members for the whole district, and the people also, supported him in the action which he took last session in regard to the Bill; but he (Mr. Menteuth) ventured to say that, if a poll were taken of the inhabitants of the Westland Education District and the results were placed before the House, it would be seen that the people were very much opposed to the proposal contained in the measure. As to the fact of the Greymouth representative agreeing with the honourable member for Kumara in trying to get the district subdivided, he might say that he was informed that that gentleman had no authority from his constituents for taking such a course. He was not going to take up time in explaining that gentleman's conduct or reasons for trying to push the Bill through without consulting the wishes of his constituents, as that was

quite irrelevant to the question. The second | reason given by the honourable member for Kumara for pushing the Bill through was that the legislation of 1893 had been passed after very careful consideration, and after an examination had been made of all the circumstances of the case. However, as the Premier had just made a suggestion which he was ready to accept, he would say no more on the ques-tion on this occasion, but would reserve any remarks which he had to make until the Bill got into Committee.

Mr. GUINNESS would just like to say that, as a representative of one portion of the district which it was proposed to subdivide, he would, when the Bill got into Committee, do all he could to prevent the subdivision taking place. \*When the 2nd clause of the Bill came on for consideration, he would, with the assistance of the honourable member for Inangahua, endeavour to use such arguments as would, he thought, convince the House that this was an improper measure to pass, and he would then suggest that it would not be wise to revive the provisions of the Act of last session.

Bill committed.

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#### BEET-ROOT SUGAR BILL.

Sir J. VOGEL, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said,-This Bill proposes the introduction of a most important industry. I have no doubt that there are many honourable members who are better acquainted with the subject than I am, although I have given some amount of attention to it. So long ago as 1876 a very elaborate paper was presented to Parliament, in which, in regard to beet-root sugar manufacture and production, a great deal of information was obtained from various countries. Since that time, the production of beet-root sugar has increased to a great extent. I believe it may be said that, to all intents and purposes, the greater part of Europe now entirely depends on beet sugar, to the exclusion of cane sugar. Regarding the question as it affects New Zealand, I shall have to ask the indulgence of honourable members, for I know that when one has to read a large number of extracts it deprives the remarks made of that amount of interest which verbal communications present. I shall have to bring forward authorities of various kinds, and to make comments upon them, so as not to leave honourable members in doubt of the source from which I have obtained the information I propose to lay before them. The importation into New Zealand of sugar amounts to over half a million sterling. During the year 1883 it amounted to over £600,000. The manufacture of sugar, which it is proposed by this Bill to encourage, will not aim only at the production of sugar; but the residuum from the beet-root is valuable, and the residuum from sorghum is also very valuable. The residuum from the beet is especially valuable in the production of meat, and in connection with dairy operations; so that, besides aiming at keeping in the colony the large amount of money annually sent out of it for sugar, we have to con-

Mr. Menteath

sider the indirect advantages which may be derived in the raising of stock and in dairy operations. I may read to the House a short extract from a very well-informed and interest-ing paper, the Canterbury Times, with a view of showing what large results may be expected from such an industry. It says,

"A movement is now on foot, having for its object the establishing beet-root factories in England and Ireland, with a view to enabling the farmers of those countries to supplement their curtailed sources of revenue. It is precisely for this same reason that we in New Zealand should endeavour to establish such industries as will enable us still to retain our prosperity in the face of a declining wheat market.

"The value of beet-root pulp for feeding purposes, according to Boussingault, is as follows: 5lb. of beet are equal to 1lb. of dry hay in nutritive powder for feeding purposes. Beetroot pulp, after it has been pressed for the extraction of the juice, has the same value as the original which produced it, weight for weight, so that its price may readily be established on the basis of 4½lb. of pulp being equivalent to 1lb. of dry hay—that is, 100lb. of pulp to 22lb. of good hay."

Now, I would call the attention of the House to the wonderful effect of this industry in France, as shown especially in the neighbourhood of the Town of Valenciennes. A French

writer, speaking of beet sugar, says, "In the first rank of culture there is one which has been developed almost entirely since 1789, and which, perhaps, may be regarded as the greatest agricultural conquest of our time - sugar-beet root. It was feared at the commencement that the cultivation of the sugar beet would curtail the production of beef and corn by occupying the best lands and exhausting them; but this was an unfounded fear, in so far as regards the bestcultivated lands. It has been proved at the present time that the manufacture of sugar, in creating a new source of profit, also increases other productions of the soil. The extraction of the saccharine matter deprives the root of but a part of its elements; the pulp and leaves afford abundant food for animals, and the profits of sugar-manufacture enable the fertility of the soil to be indefinitely increased by the purchase of chemical manures (engrais commerciaux). In 1853 the Town of Valenciennes, the principal locality of this industry, was able to erect a triumphal arch with these significant words thereon: 'Yield of wheat in the district before the manufacture of sugar, 353,000 hecrounder to it and the sugar, so yearly]; number of cattle, 700. Yield of wheat after the establishment of the sugar industry, 421,000 hectolitres; number of cattle, 11,500.'"

Sir, it is supposed by many people to whom I have talked on this subject that, because it may be necessary to encourage this industry at the starting by State assistance in one shape or another, such assistance will have to be continued to that industry. Such is far from being the case. In fact, the receipts derived

in the shape of Excise duties from the manufacture of beet sugar in Europe are very large. I have before me some particulars in reference to Germany. In 1840 the gross receipts from beet sugar amounted to £6,037, in 1850-51 the amount received was £220,894, in 1860-61 the amount received was £1,100,776, and in 1873-74 the revenue from this source was £2,823,011. The increase in the amount of revenue derived is very significant, as indicating the probable effect of introducing this industry into the colony. Now, Sir, I would invite the attention of the House to an extract from the "Transactions of the New Zealand Institute." The high price of labour in this colony, as compared with the price of labour in Europe, has been regarded as a bar to the success of this industry in New Zealand. There are a great many people in New Zealand who take a great interest in this subject; and one among them is Mr. George Graham, of Auckland, who not only takes an interest in raising seed in the colony, but also takes great interest in watching the results, especially the commercial results, of this industry in Europe. In a paper read by Mr. Hunt, of Auckland, before the New

Beet-Root

Zealand Institute, he says,—
"Mr. George S. Graham saw in Belgium the books of a sugar company, which showed that for seven years they had averaged 15,372 tons beet used per annum, the percentage of sugar 936, and the profit actually paid in dividends 27:57 per cent. Though this shows less than all the foregoing estimates, yet included in that there may be trade losses, which are not taken

into account in the former estimates.

"As to the difference in the cost of labour in New Zealand and on the Continent, I do not think much of that, as our land is cheaper, and hence there is less interest or rent to pay, less taxation, and with approved appliances for cultivation it ought to be as cheap to produce beet here as in Europe, and here 20s. per ton might be paid for the roots instead of 16s., which seems to be the average price paid else-.where."

Now I shall read a report which Dr. Hector has been good enough to make for not. In regard to the productiveness of the 190t Dr. Hector does not speak very favourably; but I shall ask honourable members to consider what other persons who have made experiments say in connection with experiments that have been going on in various parts of the colony as to the saccharine-producing qualities of the root. Dr. Hector says, in his

memorandum,-

"Experiments have now extended over nine vears, and a large number of analyses have been made. The seed in all cases has been of the best varieties, and was imported and istributed by Government. The cultivation las been conducted under exceptional circumtances, and generally in ignorance of the best methods, so that it is only fair to select for comparison the maximum results arrived at, as the low percentages frequently obtained were due either to taking the crop while unripe, or after sprouting had commenced to re-convert

part of the sugar. The chief conditions that control the production of beet sugar are: (a.) Average temperature of the autumn months. (b.) Average monthly rainfall in summer. The character of the soil. Averaging in these respects the results for various districts, and comparing them with the averages for the North European beet-sugar-producing districts, we obtain the following table :-

Locality.		Autumn Tempera- ture.	Summer Rain per Month.	Yield: Tons per Acre.	Percentage of Sugar on Root,
Europe New Zealand—	• •	59·1	2.6	20	14.0
Auckland Taranaki Napier Wellington Christchurch	•••	60·4 58·6 58·6 56·0 52·5	2·6 8·6 1·8 1·8 2·4	12 to 15	8·4 8·7 8·4 8·7 8·2

"The causes of the deficiency of sugar in the New-Zealand-grown beets are, I believe, the following: 1. Ignorance of the best mode of cultivation; 2. The proper seasons for sowing and pulling not having been ascertained by experience founded on analyses of samples taken at different times; 3. The deficiency of phosphates and of potash salts in the soil in the form in which the beet can assimilate the substances which are absolutely essential to the

production of sugar."

It will be seen that these experiments have been made with importations made by the Government; but other experiments independent of these have been made in the Rangitikei and in the Waikato Districts. Well, Sir, I think Dr. Hector places the productiveness of the root in Europe at a somewhat high rate. such a rate as 14 per cent the production would be enormously profitable; and I do not think that Dr. Hector has taken sufficient cognizance of the fact that a great many of the roots he analysed were produced under what he admits were rather untoward circumstances. As far as I can ascertain from good authorities, wherever barley will grow, beet-root will grow as well if not better. Now, I may say that the reports which I have from other sources than Dr. Hector give me a much more favourable impression of the productiveness of the beet in this colony. I have a report showing the results of a series of experiments by Dr. Curl, of the Rangitikei District, and these experiments show that it grows to greater advan-tage in New Zealand than in Europe. For example, Dr. Curl gives the following results:—

"The seeds which were obtained from France and Germany were said to have a percentage of sugar in the same kind of roots, the previous year to my obtaining seed, as that given below; and the average of my tests from several roots selected at various parts of the field when grown, and tested by the different methods, gave as under:-From France: Betterave blanche, 12 per cent. of sugar (with me, 12 per cent.); disette blanche à collet rose, 7 per cent. (with me, 9 per cent.); disette blanche à collet vert, 8 per cent. (with me, 9½ per cent.); betterave vilmorin, 16 per cent. (with me, 17½ per cent.); betterave jaune globe, 6 per cent. (with me, 6 per cent.); betterave jaune sarrazin, 6½ per cent. (with me, 7 per cent.). From Germany: Magdebourg, 11½ per cent. (with me, 13½ per cent.); Imperial, 13½ per cent. (with me, 15½ per cent.). From Northern Russia: One of the best Russian varieties, 15½ per cent. (with me, 16½ per cent.). From Austria: A variety from Austria, 15 per cent. (with me, 16½ per cent.)."

It will be observed that these roots are from various parts of Europe, the temperatures of which widely vary, and it is natural to suppose that a little time may be necessary before we find the description which will best flourish in different parts of the colony, and Dr. Curl says these figures give the result of cultivating some

of the best varieties:-

"These figures coming out as the result of cultivating some of the best varieties to yield sugar in other countries, proved to me that the beet-root would, in this country, yield a large or larger proportion of sugar; and as the quantity per acre was as much as that in other countries, and in some experiments greater, I saw that it only required a manufactory to be established here to enable that root to be grown, and sugar made, at a profit to all concerned; and, even while there was no manufactory of sugar, the beet-roots fed to cattle, pigs, &c., quickly fattened them, as soon as they were taught to eat this new kind of food. But, as labour is so expensive here, the beet-root will not be largely cultivated until a manufactory is established to work up the beet-root into sugar."

Now, Sir, we come to the Waikato experiments. I will not trouble honourable members with many details; but a very large series of trials made by Mr. Pond gave the average result of 12 29 per cent.—the highest trial showing 15 per cent., and the lowest 9 82 per cent. All the testimony I have shows that in the Waikato district the root grows as well as can possibly be desired. Mr. Pond says, in a paper which he read on this subject,—

"I hope the early future may find such an establishment situated where it would be most profitably worked—in the centre of the Waikato district; where soil, temperature, and the absence of sea air proclaim its fitness for the growth of the beet; and, to show the results of a factory in full working order, I will conclude by reading the result of eight years' working of the North German Sugar Company, as extracted from their books by Mr. G. S. Graham:—

Year.	Beet-root.	Sugar.	Dividend.
	Cwt.	per cent.	
1870-71	208,575	9.13	32 per cent.
1871-72	128,680	9.29	30 "
1872-73	274,595	9.00	24
1873-74	328,035	9.00	24
1874-75	194,370	10.37	30 "
1875-76	356,410	9.08	30
1876-77	303,825	9.54	24
1877-78	357,630	11:00	Vot ascertained

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These results show the astonishing profit of 32 per cent., 30 per cent., 24 per cent., 24 per cent., 29 per cent., 30 per cent., 24 per cent., for seven consecutive years. I may also be permitted to refer to a note which has been addressed to me by a gentleman living in Hawke's Bay, who, I think, is well known throughout the whole colony for the enterprise and ability with which he devotes himself to the promotion of cultivation. I allude to Mr. Thomas Tanner. He wrote to me recently as follows:—

"My DEAR SIR JULIUS,—In answer to your query about sugar-beet, I may say that we have tried it, and it grows to perfection, great in quantity per acre, and of good quality. All we want is a company to start the manufacture, and the supply of the root would be unlimited. I have reserved a fine site of three acres close to the railway, in the Town of Hastings, for the purpose, with the intention of presenting it to any company that will start the manufacture; and all that is wanting is some one who has the necessary knowledge and capital.—I remain, &c.,

"Thomas Tanner."

I think it may be safely said that at any rate it is ascertained that in three important districts of the colony—namely, Waikato, Hawke's Bay, and Rangitikei—the beet may be grown to great advantage; whilst there seems to be an opinion, from the various sources from which I have obtained informstion, that in Canterbury also the beet would grow to advantage. As regards Otago, it does not seem to have been tried there to any great extent, and probably the varieties which would flourish in the warmer clime of the north part of this Island would not be suitable varieties for the more southerly parts of the colony. Before I proceed to the provisions of the Bill, I will say a few words upon the sorghum industry. I have exclusively devoted my remarks to the beet-root, so far. Sorghum, as shown by an experiment which has been carried on in the most public-spirited manner by a gentleman in Auckland, the brother of a member of this House-Mr. Justice Gilliesmay be made the medium of a most profitable production in this colony. Dr. Hector has given me a report upon the subject, which, so to speak, condenses the results achieved by Mr. Justice Gillies' experiments. I should like, if I had time, to read to the House a very interesting paper which Mr. Justice Gillies read on the subject at Auckland. He shows that, in the first instance, the results were that his children were able to make a considerable amount of toffy out of the sorghum; and afterwards he actually obtained sugar, the com-mercial value of which he was able to ascer-These results are shown by the report, which I will now read, from Dr. Hector, as follows :-

"Trial cultivations have been made in most parts of the colony; but the most careful experiments have been conducted near Auckland by Mr. Justice Gillies, who has carried them to the practical conclusion of actually producing sugar by improved machinery, which he im-

ported from America.

"His results prove that a crop of 12 to 16 tons of canes per acre yields 80 to 90 gallons of juice, which, reduced to 14 gallons of syrup, weighs 13lb. per gallon. This yields 9½lb. of cane sugar and 7 per cent. of glucose. Calculated on the ton and acre, this gives 123lb. of sugar per ton, or 1,482lb. per acre, which, at 230 per ton, gives nearly £20 per acre, to which has to be added the value of the glucose or brewers' syrup; the waste, which is valuable cattle-feed; and the seed, which is good for fowls."

"This is considerably higher than any return

yet obtained in America.

"Comparing the various analyses that have been made, we get the following averages of cane sugar per ton:—

			Per cent.		
" American				10.1	
North of Au		13.1			
Auckland Is	thmus			10-2	
Opotiki				11.7	
Gisborne				9.6	
Wellington				6.1	
Nelson				7.2	
Otago (inter	ior?)	••		8.4	

"These are maximum results from each district, as the lower returns were evidently due to the canes having been cut at the wrong time, or not having been properly preserved."

When you come to consider a question of this kind, you are quite safe in taking the higher results, because you may be sure that in the experiments made there necessarily has not been that amount of knowledge and experience which will be gathered after large attention has been paid to the cultivation. This equally applies to sorghum and beet sugar—in fact, to all sugar yet produced within the colony. The Bill provides that for a period of fifteen years there shall be no Excise duty raised to the extent of one halfpenny per pound within the amount of duty charged on imported sugar—that is to say, that there shall be a difference between the duty charged on imported sugar and an Excise duty amounting to one halfpenny: in fact, the producers of sugar are to have the advantage of one halfpenny per pound differential duty for a period of fifteen years. And it is further provided that for the first thousand tons of sugar produced in the colony there shall be given a bonus of one halfpenny per pound. If this Bill is not passed, and we con-tinue the same rate of duty—and there is little chance of its being reduced—no one will think of imposing upon an industry, if started locally, an Excise duty. You will not find such a thing done in Queensland, where sugar is produced very largely. You do not find an Excise duty on wine in Victoria or in New South Wales; and we who know this colony may feel persuaded that, if any person started the industry without the assistance of Parliament, the probability is that the sugar produced would not be subjected to Excise. But, to give confidence to those who will have to spend a

large amount of money in the introduction of an industry, there is a necessity for such an assurance by Parliament. The result will be this: that, if the industry is not one calculated to be successful in the colony, this Bill will have little or no effect; while, if the industry prove, as I believe it will, a large and profitable one, the country would obtain, at a very small sacrifice of duty, an industry which would keep within its shores between half a million and a million of money which is now sent away every year for the purchase of sugar. It would also be the means of enabling large cultivating operations to be carried on, and would provide employment for thousands of men. We are, I believe, about to be visited by a very influential deputation from Belgium, with the view of establishing commercial relations between New Zealand and Belgium, and with the view of introducing here, I believe, a considerable amount of Belgian capital, if the opportunity is found to be one offering inducement. I had the pleasure of meeting M. De Harven, who came over to see me before he wrote his book, and before he made the proposals which he has laid before the Belgian Government. I cannot help thinking that this is an industry which will be viewed with particular favour by our visitors, because it is said, and, I think, with reason, that the best machinery for making sugar from the beet is now manufactured in Belgium. As I have said, we shall make no sacrifice in passing this Bill, while we may aid, I think, in encouraging a vast industry. In fact, it may be almost spoken of as a certainty; because the experi-ments made with sorghum and with the beet in three important districts of the colony— Hawke's Bay, Rangitikei, and Waikato—establish the fact that they can be grown with advantage. I may say that chemical science has made vast strides during the last two years in the way of enabling beet sugar to be made both better and cheaper. It can now be made identical in all respects with cane sugar, and free from the flavour which was held to be, and was at one time, so objectionable. It can be made, too, under much more economical conditions; and, in fact, it is the case that beet sugar is the main if not the only sugar now used in Europe, and there is an immense quantity of beet sugar used in the United Kingdom. The manufac-ture of beet sugar has now, under high and influential auspices, been again commenced in the United Kingdom. I trust that this measure will not come under the ban of those who disapprove of any projects or schemes, as they call them, for benefiting the different parts of It is brought down by the Governthe colony. ment in the belief that it is necessary that the industries of the colony should be promoted. We have not had time this session to go into the question thoroughly. We feel that there is no question of a larger and more burning nature than this question of promoting the industries of the colony. That we are not able to depend upon wheat-growing has been made abundantly appearent, and it is desirable we should seek other outlets for the industry of the

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agriculturist. Some of those outlets, I admit, are growing up in a most satisfactory manner. For a cottage industry nothing, for example, could be more suitable than hop-growing; and great credit is due to those who have promoted the increased attention which has been shown to dairy pursuits. This is an industry well worthy of the attention of the House; and, whether we look at it from the point of its magnitude, or from that of the widely-spread advantages which it would confer upon the colonists generally in all parts of the country, I cannot help thinking that it is well worthy of the attention of honourable members. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

Colonel TRIMBLE.—I do not think that a Bill of this kind, so important in its general character, should be allowed to pass without at least a few words from both sides of the House. I cannot imitate the glowing language which the honourable gentleman has used in his description of the beet root sugar trade. He seems to think that if we were only once embarked in this enterprise riches would flow in upon us. There is a circumstance that I should have liked the honourable gentleman to have made some allusion to, and which I think illustrates the position we should find ourselves in were we to accept this Bill. For several years past the sugar-refiners at Home have demanded a sort of protection on account of the bounty system in France, — which, I think, is also carried on in Germany. The allegation was made that, owing to this bonus system, the refining trade at Home was hampered, and that grievous loss took place in the trade. It was pointed out that British labour was not employed which might otherwise have been employed, and that that labour which was in the trade was not paid as it ought to have been. It was pointed out by the Minister of the day, no matter to what party he may have belonged, that what was a loss to the sugar refiners was a gain to the English consumer. Lately a Commission was appointed to consider the whole question of sugar bounties and their effect upon the refining trade; and the result is something like this: It has been proved incontrovertibly that the refining trade at Home has largely increased; and, further, that the saving to the country as a whole is greater, by allowing things to remain as they are, than the whole of the wages of the sugar-refining trade put together. Therefore it would positively pay the country to keep the whole of the labourers employed in that trade idle during the remainder of their lives, rather than put on a protective duty such as that given by the French system of bounties. The figures are something remarkable. refined sugar and candy produced in 1879 amounted to 3,018,824cwt. In 1883 it had increased to 3,283,920cwt., being an increase of 265,096cwt., or about 81 per cent. The refiners at Home were, on the other hand, able to export, in 1879, 896,243cwt., and in 1883 1,155,787cwt., or an increase of 259,544cwt., being 29 per cent. The sugar-refiners pointed

out to the Commission that sat upon the subject that the price of refined sugar was reduced in England, owing to the bounty system in France, by id. per pound to the consumer. That was calculated to give a saving of two and a half millions to the taxpayer in Great Britain, owing to the stupidity and folly of the French Government, and it was proved unmistakably that that two and a half millions was more than enough to pay for the whole of the labour engaged in the sugar-refining trade. There is another curious fact in this cheapening process, and it is this: that the refined sugar is going to be largely used in various industries. The cheaper the sugar the more of these industries prosper, and the greater is the number of people employed in them. If we reduce the price of sugar by id. per pound, there is no doubt that, in our own country, we may become producers of jam to as large an extent as they are becoming at Home, for here we can get the fruit very cheap. Now, there are 12,000 hands employed in the jam trade in Great Bri-tain at present, and they are using, of refined sugar alone, 100,000 tons a year. Our object ought to be not to keep up the price of sugar, but rather to reduce it; and I maintain that all this tinkering with the natural flow of trade is but increasing the burden on our farmers, who are the consumers of the country. It is they who will have to pay for the profits made by the manufacturers of the sugar, and for the increased price which is to be put on that article. We are loading all these burdens on the farmers of the country, and all these measures go in that direction. They are the consumers who will have to pay for this bounty-for that is substantially what it is-because we have, first, this bonus of £4,666 for the first one thousand tons produced, and then we have this increased duty. It is far better to leave things alone, and, if we do not take off burdens, at least to not put them on. The farmer's trade is paid for by prices not made in New Zealand, but in Great Britain. On the other hand, you are, by all these artificial measures, raising the price of what he consumes, and you are positively putting the fruit-producer out of the market by raising the price of sugar. I can see no advantage in this Bill. It will lead to capital being withdrawn from trades in which it can be profitably employed, in order to go into this protected trade. That is always the tendency. It has been the tendency in America, and it was the tendency in England until free-trade was established, and it will be the tendency here. The production will become greater than the consumption of the article. Then that article will have to compete in the foreign market, and the prices will go down below what will leave a profit. You will get into extravagant habits in regard to all your manufacturing operations, and the consequence will be that, even when you have come to the point of producing more than the country requires, you will not be able to produce it at a price at which you can export it. I pointed out a short time ago that that was the position of the steel trade

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-and, indeed, of the whole iron trade -- of America. Although they have their furnaces idle, and large stocks on hand, they cannot compete with England in putting the article on the market; and that is what you must look forward to at all times. The honourable gentleman has said that the Ministry have not had time to consider the encouragement of local industries as they could wish. Well, I hope the Ministry will never have time to go into this subject, for I know what it means. The encouragement of industry means that the few shall be kept up at the cost of the many. real encouragement of all industries is to leave those industries alone, and they will find their own level. I shall oppose this Bill as far as I possibly can by all honourable means, and I shall certainly vote against the second reading. Mr. BROWN.—My honourable friend who has just sat down says he sees no advantage in this Bill, and he has quoted instances to show that it would not be well to encourage local industries. He has also told us what has taken place elsewhere. He evidently does not believe in encouraging local industry. He tells us, that, rather than give any benefit to sugar-re-finers as the Bill proposes, it would be better to keep all the people engaged in that trade in a state of idleness. That is the whole text of his speech, and he would rather do that than encourage local industries. I ask him to look at our woollen manufactories. There we have one of our own products manufactured to such an excellence as to be able to compete with the imported article. If we are to start this sugar-production it will necessitate the employment of a large amount of labour, also the introduction of very expensive machinery; and yet, rather than aid it, the honourable gentleman would prefer to see people kept in idle-ness. The Mosgiel and other similar factories are protected by an import duty of 15 per cent. The clothes which my honourable friend wears were probably manufactured there, or, if they were not, they ought to be, and then he would know that he would get much better value than by purchasing the imported article. This is what has resulted from encouraging the capital of the colony to be engaged in colonial enterprises; and yet the honourable member would come here with his antiquated notions about Free-trade and Protection, and try to instil them into the minds of the people of this country. I maintain that it is our duty to encourage local manufactures in every way that we possibly can, because, although we may at first suffer a little in revenue, we shall gain considerably in the employment of labour. What would be the position of the neighbouring Colony of Queensland at the present time if it had not been for the encouragement given to the manufacture of sugar? Certainly she has a different climate. Nature has a variety of gifts, and we should use those which are given us for the benefit of the people. The honourable gentleman has told us—as an authority, I suppose—that the French people have suffered to the extent of two and a half millions by giving bonuses to this manufacture; but I have no doubt the French people are very well able to take care of themselves in the matter of trade, and do not want any advice from my honourable friend. Whatever I can do by vote or voice—so long as it does not entail any material loss-will be to encourage native industries and local manufactures, believing such a course will beneficially affect the colony for all time.

Mr. GILLIES.-Mr. Speaker, if ever I desired to have the power to convince my fellows, it is on this occasion I wish it, for I feel that a measure has been brought before us this night which every honourable member ought to hail with delight and do his very best to help on. I cannot understand the position which has been taken by the honourable member for Taranaki. I could hardly have believed there was a man in this House who would stand up and advocate that we should not go forward, that we should stand still, and that we should wait until industries and everything else develop themselves. I would ask that honourable member where his district would have been if he had left it in a state of nature—left it as it was originally. What would have become of it if the Government of the country had not tried in some way to help Taranaki? I am afraid the savage and Nature alone would have claimed it to this day. We in the South, at least, are not accustomed to view things in that way. We quite believe that God helps those who help themselves, and that if we want to go ahead we must put our own shoulders to the wheel and help, and it is not by simply waiting until the shower of gold pops into our lap that we are to get on. We have tried this starting of industries in the South, and we have succeeded. And how did those in-One industry has been dustries succeed? alluded to as one of the most successful in this colony. I refer to the woollen manufactory industry. I have no hesitation whatever in saying that it would not have succeededthat it could never have succeeded-had it not been for the small bonus given by the Govern-ment to start it. And there is no doubt in my mind that this sugar-beet industry cannot be started unless some help is given by the Government towards starting it. The honourable member for Taranaki seems to be possessed with the idea that this Bill proposes to increase the burdens of the country-proposes to lay some new duty upon the country which does not now exist. He surely cannot have read the Bill. As I read the Bill it clearly and distinctly says that the duty which is at present existing in regard to sugar shall not be taken off. That is very different from saying that any burden is to be increased in any way. I do not take it at all in that light. The only special advantage given in this Bill is a bonus of 1d. a pound on the first thousand tons of sugar, which I reckon at somewhere between £4,000 and £5,000. That is all the special advantage which is given. The present duty upon sugar is to be retained; but there is nothing whatever in the Bill to prevent the duty on sugar being lowered—being done away with altogether. There is nothing whatever in the Bill to prevent that.

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An Hon. MEMBER.—Look at clause 4. Mr. GILLIES.—There is always to be a halfpenny difference between the two. But there is nothing whatever to prevent its being reduced, or taken away. As it stands just now, there is a duty of a halfpenny on sugar, and that is proposed to be retained. Now, is this sugar-beet industry an industry that it is wise to establish? And I would join issue with the honourable member for Taranaki, who has said that this is not a class of Bill that ought to be brought before this House, or ought to engage the attention of honourable members. It seems to me this is the very class of Bill that ought to engage our attention. We find that the country has been in a most distressed state for some considerable time. We are all anxious to evolve some measure by which that depression will be removed and the prospects of the country improved. There is one direction in which undoubtedly the prospects of the country have been greatly injured, and that is in regard to the question of the growth of wheat. A large portion of the benefit in this colony to country settlers has arisen from the high price of wheat that has existed in past y ars—the being able to grow it with profit. Recent events have shown pretty clearly that the days of growing wheat profitably are pretty nearly ended. Our farmers have a very blue look out before them. The wool industry, I am happy to say, is looking up a little; and preserved meat is looking up; but, so far as wheat is concerned, there is very little hope for the future. It is a question which is engaging the attention of many estimable settlers throughout the length and breadth of the country, what is to take the place of this industry which they see is suddenly departing from us. Therefore I say that any measures whatever that will tend in the direction of showing us the means whereby the farmers are to supersede the growing of wheat ought to engage our attention, and we ought to hail it with delight. I, for one, am not one of those who think that the only way by which we are to benefit the country is by the expenditure of large sums of money, and the making of railways and other public works here and there. These things will help, no doubt; but the main thing for us to aim at is to enable our country settlers, our producers, to produce more exportable articles, or to reduce the cost at which they produce them. These are considerations which it is most important for us to bear in mind, and anything that will enable us in any way to increase the exports of the country and thereby bring in money into our coffers - anything of that sort—I maintain, is of infinitely more importance than anything else that can engage the attention of the House at this time. When we look at the beet-root sugar industry, what do we find? That it will save a very considerable sum of money going out of the country, if it is successful; and we find that, in regard to feeding stock, and in many other ways, it would help the farming industry to a very large extent. What is the great difficulty connected

with it? I believe many farmers throughout the country have been under the impression -no doubt some members of this House, too, will be under the impression still—that the greatest difficulty in connection with this industry is the very high price of labour, and the necessity that was thought to exist for the sugar-beet root being utilized at once. I confess that, until I looked into the matter some time ago, I was under the impres-sion that the root required to be utilized at once, and that, unless you had the necessary capital, the necessary machinery, and the necessary hands to take and use the roots fresh, there was an enormous loss. It has been discovered of late years, and acted on sufficiently long now to make it a matter of perfect cer-tainty, that the roots can be used long after being dug up and stored, and that the whole process can be spread over a period of six months: indeed, the whole process of the manufacture of sugar can be spread over twelve months. Now, this is a very important point for us in New Zealand, because it does away with the necessity for such a large number of hands being required at one time as was previously thought necessary. There are many other points in which the industry has been greatly improved of late years, and which will come in handy to us in this country, and enable us to carry on the industry satisfactorily. There is still this, remaining: that you must have a very considerable capital invested in mills for the purpose. Now, those who embark in that, and who understand it, will not come here and risk their capital in erecting mills unless they have some assurance that existing conditions will not be interfered with. And that assurance is just what this Bill gives. It says, "If you like to go and put up a mill"—costing, perhaps, £50,000 or £60,000, for a mill of a first-class character, or down to £20,000-" we guarantee to you that, for a certain number of years, we will not alter the existing state of affairs." How can you expect people to come all the way from Europe and lay out large sums in a new venture, when in a moment the whole condition of things can be altered, so as to render their enterprise perfectly nugatory? I believe the time has come, and that the time is very opportune, for entering upon the consideration of this industry; and, if it is once entered into, I am quite sure it will result in great benefit to the whole of New Zealand. Whilst the Colonial Treasurer was speaking. I remembered having read some very good re-marks in reference to it in a recent issue of the Bruce Herald, published in the district from which I come; and, far from the people in the South being apathetic about this matter, I can only say that during my election contest recently I was over and over again pressed in reference to the matter. The people of the South, though it may be thought that their climate or their lands are not suitable, are quite alive to it, and are moreover, I believe, quite prepared to try it. I believe it is a mistake to suppose that the climate is not suitable

for growing some sorts of sugar-beet root. It is quite a mistake to suppose that the lands in the South will not produce it. In regard to quantities and qualities there is not a shadow of a doubt that in New Zealand the roots can be produced in quantities per acre as large as in Europe, with quite as large a proportion of sugar in them. I will just read one sentence from this letter, which was written by a gentleman who knows a great deal about the matter.

"The hundreds of men employed in these factories will make the hearts of the shopkeepers rejoice, and the farmers of every kind—great and small—will not find times so bad as they are now, and have been for the past ten years; but, instead, it is no exaggeration to say that every man who grows ten acres of beet ought to be able to put £100 into the bank; or if he grew one hundred acres he ought to put away a profit of £1,000, and still spend £1,000 in improving and working his farm each year. This may seem very visionary to those who do not know the facts, but to any one who, like myself, has seen what is done by this industry in the countries of the Continent of Europe, and has had the opportunity of looking at the accounts of friends who were working these farms and factories, great and small, they feel no doubt, but are certain when they can recollect the figures that proved that from £1,200 to £1,600 was each year made as profit out of one hundred acres in these countries by beet-growing; and that thus families in Belgium and elsewhere could live respectably and comfortably on from one to three acres of land, and that on four or five acres, after paying all family expenses, they were saving money."

Statements like these, made by a practical man, made by a man in New Zealand, knowing the conditions of things here, ought, I think, to make us hesitate before we characterize the bringing-forward of this measure as being visionary, or as a matter beneath our notice. I do hope that this Assembly will pass the second reading of this Bill, and give every consideration towards helping on this industry and I am only sorry I did not know that it was coming on to-night, or I should have been able

to speak better on the subject. Mr. GRIGG.—I regret very much indeed that I cannot see my way to support this Bill. I say I regret it very much, because I am quite sure the Treasurer has the very best motive in bringing it forward. The honourable gentleman has taken a great amount of trouble in connection with it, and has given us a great deal of information on the subject; but, if he had practical information upon it, I am sure he would entirely change his mind. I cannot vote for the Bill, because I believe sincerely that it will result in failure, only inducing the misapplication of capital and the misapplication of labour. An industry of this kind is essentially more or less a garden industry. It is an industry for a fully-populated country. I can quite understand what a success it might be in Belgium, or in any country in Europe where land is good; but here I think it would be great folly

to induce capitalists to put their money in such an undertaking. The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer said, quoting some one, that he did not think much of the difference in the price of labour in this country as compared with European countries, as land is cheap. Now, I will draw his attention to an illustration of that. Taking the land as worth £1 10s. an acre rental in this country, such land on the Continent of Europe, I take it, would be worth £3 an acre. The labour on the beet-root crop—the growing and delivery to the mill-would be somewhere about at least £7 an acre on the Continent of Europe. I think, if these figures are correct, it would be a very low estimate indeed, for the sake of comparison, to put the labour and cost of growing the crop in this country at £15 per acre. That is a very low estimate. The safest rule, I have always found, is to multiply the cost of the English labour by three: in nearly all classes of labour that method gives a very nearly correct estimate; and, at any rate, in respect of agricultural labour, it brings out a very nearly correct result. But I will only take it at a little more than twice the cost of labour in England, and then the relative position would be-if our land here is worth £1 10s. an acre and the labour expenditure £15 —that it will cost £16 10s., as against, on the Continent, £3 an acre for rental and £7 an acre for labour: that would be £10. There, at once, we have it shown that the cost of growing a crop and delivering it to the mill would be at least £6 greater here than where labour is cheap, notwithstanding that the rent there is double the cost here. But I take it that the greatest argument against the proposal is that, in our present position here, such application of our available labour is unnecessary. Here we have hundreds of thousands of acres of unoccupied land, and I say it is folly to go turning this country into gardens before we subdue the There is an enormous profit in making our acres productive, in subduing the lands of the wilderness. First of all, let us get a population here, and then we may look about for these things. But it is altogether a folly, a delusion, and we are only leading astray the capitalists and our neighbours by trying to force such an industry now. It may be thought very strange indeed that I, being a farmer and representing an agricultural district, should refuse this bonus. But I would not refuse it unless I were most thoroughly satisfied that no good whatever can come of it. It is of no use keeping our eyes fixed on this delusion, when we have a great fact like the development of this magnificent country before us. To suppose that we are going to develop the wilderness by growing beet-root is a perfect absurdity. The Treasurer said that the result of growing beet-root in Europe was to increase the other products of the soil. I have had no practical knowledge of growing beet-root but I have had a great described. root, but I have had a great deal of practical knowledge of growing that which is the very nearest thing possible to it—that is, mangolds -and I may say that no white crop can be grown that impoverishes the soil like that kind

If you will grow any green crops by the side of mangolds, and I believe I may say by the side of beet-root, you will see the evident depreciation of the soil. The depreciation of the soil from growing wheat is not to be compared with its depreciation by growing mangolds, and you must remember that in growing bect every bit will be carried off the soil and taken away to the factory; and, although the refuse may be of some value, yet it is gathered together in such quantities in a single place that I say it is not available and cannot be made available in this country for feeding stock to any great extent, for the reason that the price of labour is too great. The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer compared it to the value of hay. That comparison is a very good one for the countries in Europe, where hay is worth from £4 to £7 a ton; but hay to our farmers here is not worth more than £1 10s. a ton, and it can be grown at a profit at £1 10s. a ton, and for less than that. What is the value of the refuse, when tested by such comparison? The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, in referring to this, said that 100lb. of the refuse was equal to 22lb. of hay, and, according to that, the 100lb. would be worth only 31d. Then, from there being more bulk in the article, the amount of labour that would have to be bestowed upon it would absorb all the profits. Further than that, we are in a position here to obtain our supplies of sugar at the lowest possible price. We are very near Australia, and Queensland and New South Wales are free-trade countries; and we are near the islands of the Pacific. We have already one large sugar refinery in New Zealand, and are therefore in a position to obtain the supply of sugar we require at the lowest possible price. Under these circumstances, I do not think it is possible that the growing of sugar-beet root will ever be profitable in this country. A few weeks before I came to Wellington I got a letter from the Industrial Association of Canterbury asking me to give them any information I could with regard to the growing of beet-root. Before doing so, I went to the Secretary of the Agricultural and Pastoral Association at Christchurch, who is an exceedingly well-informed man—I believe one who, on general matters regarding agriculture, is as well informed as any one I have ever mot and his reply to me was that he, with others, at the request of the Industrial Association, had gone most carefully into calculations, and had come to the conclusion that there was nothing at all in it; that they were perfectly satisfied that the thing would be a failure. We have had an instance of this kind only recently. About eighteen months ago action was taken with reference to the growing of flax, and the matter was placed before the farmers in glowing colours; it was said we were going to make an enormous profit from it. I reasoned the thing out in a simple way. I said, if this can yield such enormous advantages, why does not Russia, where labour is so cheap, grow a larger quantity; and why do not the Irish, when land is so good and labour so cheap in Ireland, grow a larger quantity? If it

is so very profitable, would not that be the case? I believe in every case it has been an utter failure in Canterbury, and that the company about to be wound up; and I am quite sure will be the same with regard to beet-root. We cannot compete against the cheap labour at the Fijians, and in Australia they get coolis labour. What would the labourers say here they were asked to compete against the coolie of Australia?—and that is what must be the case if the growth of sugar-beet is to become a great industry in this country. It is a complete delusion, and I, for one, shall vote against this Bill, because I do not wish to delude any one. At the same time, I regret very much having to vote against the Bill, and I hope the Colonial Treasurer will give me credit, as I do him, for sincerity, and will believe that I have no other motive, but that I believe if the industry is tried it will result in miserable failure. My opposition is due to a clear conviction, and not to any other motive.

Mr. LANCE.—I have always had the greatest possible respect for the opinions of the honourable member for Wakanui on every agricultural question that I have heard him discuss; but I must say that, after the speech he has delivered this evening, I shall consider very carefully what he says. The honourable gentleman said that he thought that the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer required a little more practical information on the subject that he has introduced to us this evening. If the House will allow me, I will endeavour to give it a little practical information on the subject; and I may say that I think I am in a position to doso, from having lived in a country where this was a very great industry. It happened by accident that, some fifteen years ago, I went to live in France, and, being fond of farming. I took a small farm in a remote part of that country—in Brittany, where, I may say, the growth of roots was at that time unknown. It was started at first for the purpose of feeding cattle, a subject to which the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer has alluded; and he has alsospoken of the value of beet-root for that purpose, after the saccharine matter has been expressed. Now, this question forced itself upon my mind first in this way. I had a very humble farm in the country; I only kept five cows; but my neighbour, a farmer at my gate, kept four-teen or fifteen cows, and yet I found that in the middle of winter more butter was sent by us to market, after supplying our own household, than he got from his fourteen cows. The reason of that was that I had grown a few roots—mangolds—and therefore my cows were very well fed when his were very badly fed. Now, I began on mangolds, and, if the House will bear with me for a few moments, I will tell how I began with them. After the first agricultural meeting that I attended in the neighbourhood in which I lived, I was invited by the president of the society to a banquet—they call things by very fine words in that country - which was to be held in the evening. I did so, and, after the usual speeches were made, to my horror—I had not been very

long in the country then—the president got up and said, "Our meeting has been honoured to day, for the first time since the formation of the society, by the presence of a stranger amongst us, who will no doubt give us his opinions on agricultural subjects;" and with that he sat down. Now, the subject of agrienliure is a very large subject to deal with, but I was compelled to say something to them, and I took this theme. I had seen, from my every-day observations, that a thing very much required in that country was to provide food for cattle in winter. They were always overstocked in winter. After I had had my say, the president got up and said, "We have heard the remarks of this gentleman, and we hope by his practice he will prove that his theory is correct;" and with that he sat down. Well, I had nothing more to say; bown. Wen, I had nothing more to say; but I cherished those remarks, and in the following year I presented myself to the same society, when, after the usual speeches had been made, I was again called on to make a speech, which I did in these terms. I said, "Your president last year threw down a challenge to me. In agriculture it takes twelve months to answer a challenge. It is not like the usual challenge of every-day life, when you go out with pistols in the morning and shoot a man or miss him, as the case may be. In agriculture it takes twelve months. took up the challenge; and now I have to ask you, have you seen my mangolds?" They said "Yes," and filled the room with their cheers. That is the real origin of the introduction of roots into that part of the country. Shortly afterwards I got a letter from the Minister of Agriculture in Paris, asking me if I thought that part of France in which I lived was suitable for the growth of beet-root, and, if I thought so would I introduce it in that part of the country? and he added that he would send me seed in any quantity, which I might distribute among the small farmers in the neighbourhood. He also said he would send people down to instruct them in the growth of the root if they did not understand it. The upshot of it all was this: that not only was best-root introduced there, but the production of sugar also; and during the time I lived in that country I saw a very small village grow up into an important town through the growth of beet root, employing a very large, industrious, and exceedingly prosperous population. I will not follow the honourable member for Taranahi in all the figures and so forth which he detailed to us. I am not going into the political economy of the question. I am only telling the House what I have seen as the practical effect of the growth of this root. When I was leaving the country, and was paying my farewell visits, a very celebrated person in that part of the country said, "If you had given £10,000 away in charity you would not have done the good to this part of the country that you have done by promoting agricultural interests, and particularly by the growth of this root. The effect of the one would be fleeting; the other is lating." Now, I call upon this House to do

its very utmost to promote the growth of this industry, which I am perfectly certain will be a most important one to this country.

Mr. MENTEATH.—The honourable gentleman who has just sat down seemed to fail altogether to catch the point of this discussion. We are not arguing as to whether the sorghum or beet-root industry would or would not be productive. We are discussing here the question whether it is the duty of the State to render the beet-root or sorghum industry productive by saddling those industries of this country already established with taxation, in order to what is called "foster" that particular industry. The whole point of the speech of the honourable member for Cheviot is, as I understand it, that he introduced into the par-ticular part of France in which he was living a vegetable which was very well fitted for that soil and climate. He told us that the introduction of that vegetable led to very beneficial results to that part of the country; but I submit that, in the whole of his speech, he did not say one word about a protective duty on that article, and that is the whole point before the House to-night. Every honourable gentleman who has spoken has talked about encouraging local industry. I venture to submit this is not a question of encouraging, but of discouraging, local industry. It is a question of fostering an exotic industry at the expense of the natural and indigenous industries of the colony; and therefore, instead of taking credit to themselves for fostering local industry, those bringing in measures of this kind should be reproached for checking really good and beneficial industries by taxing them to force the growth of exotic industries. This is merely taxing the general community for the benefit of a small section of the community: that is what we are doing by introducing these Bills. There may be a good deal to be said in favour of the system of bonuses to new industries. It may be said that, in a new country like this, it is sometimes difficult to establish a new industry, and that therefore it might be expedient to help such new industry. It may, perhaps, be shown that it is the duty of the Government to give a bonus where machinery and operatives have to be introduced into the country to enable a new industry to be established. But this is not the question we are discussing here. The question is that of giving a drawback for this industry surrendering a portion of the taxation of the country, through the Customs, to the producers of this particular vegetable for fifteen years. Now, during that fifteen years the industry may prove to be one which will flourish on our soil of itself, and may not need this fostering care for fifteen years; or, if it does not do so,. will the Government, at the end of this fifteen years, remove this advantage? After having created a special class, interested in the industry, and caused a considerable amount of capital to be put into this particular form of agriculture, will they remove this duty and so-beggar the class they have created? I venture to say that, if at the end of fifteen years a class of persons had become interested in this in-

dustry, the pressure of those persons, perhaps small in number, but directly interested, would be sufficient to prevent—or, at any rate, greatly impede—the Government when it proposed to remove this protection. Well, we heard nothing to the point in the laboured speech with which this Bill was introduced to the House; we were given no comparative statistics; we have not had any figures comparing the cost of the production of sugar from beet-root and sorghum with the cost of its production from the cane in the Fijis and Queensland. I submit that the whole question is, whether this industry could compete with the production of sugar from cane in those countries. If it can, it might be expedient to give a bonus, as proposed by the 2nd clause; but certainly it could never be expedient to give a protective coddling support to it for fifteen years. If that were done, of course before long we should have demands for the protection of a number of other industries out of the pockets of the taxpayers. The value of this industry in France, where it has attained considerable proportions, is entirely a comparative question. It may be perfectly possible that an industry like the production of sugar from beet-root, established in Belgium, might flourish, and at the same time the same industry might not flourish in a country like this; because the old countries of Europe, such as France and Belgium, have reached a point in the operation of the laws of population which we have not reached here. We have a great many indus-tries which, I submit, will pay better to foster here than in France; and therefore, while this industry might pay, contrasted with our native industries here it would not pay

An Hon. Member.—What industries?
Mr. MENTEATH.—I will proceed to tell the honourable gentleman. This system of giving protection to native industries, this so-called encouraging of local industries, has been tried in America. What has been the result of it? To do away with the whole of the American commercial navy, which has been swept from the seas. I would ask the indulgence of the House while I read a very short passage, which I think is singularly to the point in this discussion. I quote from the opinions expressed by Professor W. D. Sumner, an American eco-

nomist, who says,-

"This continual law-making about industry has been prolific of industrial and political mischief. It has tainted our political life with logrolling, presidential wire-pulling, lobbying, and customhouse politics. It has been intertwined with currency errors all the way along. It has created privileged classes in the free American community, who were saved from the risks and dangers of business to which the rest of us are liable. It has controlled the election of Congressmen, and put inferior men in office, whose inferiority has reacted on the nation in worse and worse legislation. Just now we are undergoing a spasm of indignation at official corruption, and we want to reform the Civil Service; but there is only one way to accomplish that, and that is to cut up the whole system

which has made the Civil Service what is."

Well, what is the effect of establishing thes local industries by a system of protection des tined to last over a period of years, limited or indefinite? Why, as soon as you protect the beet-root and sorghum cultivators, you will have to protect class after class in the com munity. As soon as you admit this vicious principle, you will have class after class coming and asking for the same protection as you have afforded to one. You would have to protect one as well as another, and therefore the result would be that you would have no legitimate industries, but the country covered over with these exotic industries, the result of log-rolling and wire-pulling in this House. I must admit that I was astonished when I heard the honourable member for Bruce support this measure. He talks as if we had no native industries of our own. Why, it is only within the last two or three years that we have seen, without any protection, the growth of a new and productive industry, owing to the progress of science: I refer to the meat-freezing trade. Again, we have lately been occupied in this House in devising means for the expansion of our local trade by the improvement of har-bours and otherwise. Does not the honourable member for Bruce know that every one of these exotic industries means so many pounds, shillings, and pence taken for their protection from those good and productive industries in the colony which grow up of themselves? Those engaged in these legitimate industries are the people who will have to pay for the fostering of these hot-house industries created by legislation. I was most certainly astonished to hear the honourable member for Bruce indulge in flights of rhetoric about the necessity for fostering this industry. I believe that, from its position, from its wide sea-board, from its numerous harbours, from its valuable coal, timber, and water-power, and also from its geographical position, New Zealand is fitted to be the distributing point of this hemisphere. Its climate also fits it for this position, and we ought to strive to encourage in every possible way our shipping trade; but this baneful principle that we are trying to attempt to carry out in this House to-night is the very thing that will crush it-that will tend to fetter and hamper the growt of our shipping trade. I hope, therefore, tha this Bill will be rejected by the House to-night Mr. BUCHANAN.—Sir, as an occupant ( the soil I should have hailed this measure wit very great pleasure indeed if I could for on

Mr. BUCHANAN.—Sir, as an occupant the soil I should have hailed this measure with very great pleasure indeed if I could for on moment think or believe that the dreams the introducer of the Bill were at all likely to the fulfilled. There can be no question that it various ways the country would be very largely benefited by the introduction of such an industry as this if the circumstances of the country rendered its success possible without an artificial fostering. It has been pointed out by various eminent men that, in common with older countries, we are getting too great as aggregation of population in our towns and



cities. In Victoria one half of the whole population of that colony is concentrated in the City of Melbourne. If we could, by means of this Bill, give employment to a large number of our population in the country districts, we should be doing a good work indeed. But let us turn to the facts of the case. And, dealing first with the arguments and statistics brought forward by the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, what do we find there? He said that he would gite authorities, and he expressed the hope that the House would bear patiently with him while he gave us a number of dry figures. What was the first authority he cited? It was the Canterbury Times. Well, the Canterbury Times is a very good paper indeed; but I think this House was entitled to know upon what authority these statements were published in that paper. He then went on to cite some statements made by Dr. Hector; but I think Dr. Hector was rather against the honourable gentleman, and he consequently endeavoured to cast a certain amount of discredit upon the facts stated by that gentleman. Another authority cited was Dr. Curl, who resides, I believe, somewhere on the West Coast. I do not think any practical agriculturist, who has paid any attention to the writings of Dr. Curl, would attach any importance to them. I, for one, have read some of them, and I think very little of them indeed: in fact I should be inclined to look with a good deal of suspicion upon any facts stated by that gentleman, because I do not think he is in any way a practical authority on matters connected with agriculture. There was one thing the Colonial Treasurer carefully abstained from going into, and that was the price of labour. This is the key to the whole question. It is well known that the price of labour in France, Germany, and Belgium is very different from what it is in New Zealand. Here we have a very great difficulty in dealing with ordinary agricaltural pursuits in consequence of the high price of labour; and that difficulty will pre-sent itself to a still more serious extent if we attempt to manufacture sugar from beetmot. It is well known to every practical man in this House that the growth of cereals, turnips, and other products of the soil has to be dealt with in a very different way here from the practice at Home, simply because of the price of labour. I am satisfied, from the attention I have been able to pay to the subject, that the difference in price of labour would be fatal to any hope, at the present time, of the growth of best-root for the manufacture of sugar. I think that any practical man who looks into the question will find that that is so. The honourable member for Bruce cited statistics from some southern paper—I forget the name of it—and said, quoting from the writer, that ten acres of beet-root would enable the grower to put £100 in the bank. But a statement like that is no argument at all. I think the honourable member for Bruce was only playing with the House when he was unable to give us any more cogent reasons in favour of the Bill. Some honourable gentleman, speaking on the ques-

tion, cited America: I think it was the honourable member for Inangahua. He said that various attempts had been made there to encourage industries by Protection. I think if there is any community in the world to which colonists generally have been indebted it is to the people of America. Their wonderful in-ventiveness in the direction of labour-saving machinery, and power of combination, have shown us the way to success in many branches of trade. I think it is a very significant fact indeed that we have not found them attempting the manufacture of sugar from beet on any considerable scale. They have a wide and varied range of climate, and it would be in consonance with the general policy of America to give protection to such an industry. Where they can grow wheat and Indian corn with such wonderful success as they are doing there, if it were found profitable to grow beet for the manufacture of sugar we should find them going as largely into that industry as they do into other pursuits. The reason, to my mind, is perfectly plain. It is this: The price of labour there is much the same as it is here, and they find that to be the practical bar that prevents them going into this industry. I have listened, in common with the whole of the members of this House, with very great pleasure indeed to the statements made by the honourable member for Cheviot. I, for one, think, from the clear statement he put before the House, that it is a pity he does not address the House a little oftener than he does; but I must say that, in criticising the honourable member for Wakanui, and in stopping short. where he did, he did himself very scant justice indeed. I think it was incumbent upon the honourable member for Cheviot to state exactly the conditions under which he found the growth of beet-root in France so successful. He was careful not to allude to the fact that a very large amount of protection was given to the industry; he was careful not to allude to the price of labour; he was careful, in fact, not to allude to anything except that, under circumstances known to himself, the industry had been a very great success indeed. I would ask honourable members, what weight can be attached to any statement like that, when the actual surrounding circumstances are not referred to? It contains no argument at all, to my mind, when it ignores the price of labour and other points, which are the essence of the whole question. There is another point that I, for one, had hoped to find the Colonial Treasurer allude to, and that is the question of Free-trade versus Protection. I think, as the introducer of the Bill, he should have covered as wide an extent of ground as possible, and I do not think it. was doing justice to himself to avoid alluding to the all-important principle involved. could see he was very well aware that in this House a large number of members are keenly alive to the great question involved in Free-trade versus Protection, but as long as I am a member of this House I shall do my very best to prevent any attempts, such as are

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meant in this Bill, to introduce amongst us us a policy of Protection. New Zealand has been in a very depressed state for some time past, but, Sir, it is my deliberate opinion that, if there is any one thing that would put us deeper in the mire than another, it would be the introduction of Protection. It is our duty to consider how we may, in the most effective manner, encourage native industries natural to our soil, climate, and other conditions. If we give fair-play to such industries-industries that need no artificial fostering—there can be no danger whatever as to the future of New Zealand. If there is one thing more than another which would, in my opinion, fetter native industries it is the attempt made by such a Bill as this. These are the prominent points that have occurred to my mind in con-nection with the statement of the Colonial Treasurer. As I said in commencing my remarks, if I were able to see that a Bill of this sort would help to establish an industry which would be of importance to New Zealand, the honourable gentleman would find me one of his most strenuous supporters in carrying it through the House. I utterly fail, however, to see the good that is to be gained by this measure, and I shall therefore vote against the

second reading of the Bill. Mr. W. F. BUCKLAND.—I am sorry to hear the tone that several honourable members have adopted in reference to this Bill. I may state at once that I am a supporter of it, and that I hope to see the Bill become law. I consider that it is the duty of the Government and of the House to as far as possible assist in the development of the resources of the country by other means than those which are at present in operation. There are a great many ways in which the soil of this colony can be utilized besides those we employ at the present time. That this beet can be grown from one end of the colony to the other, that sorghum can also be grown from one end of the colony to the other, and not merely grown, but grown most profitably, I am certain. That it can be grown in Auckland to very great advantage I have not the least doubt, because I have given the subject very much attention; and, in connection with this subject, it must be remembered that we have in Auckland a capital sugar-refinery, and that in itself would be an immense advantage to us in the production of sugar from sorghum. I am sorry that a great many other industries have not been included in this Bill, because there are many other industries which we might very well encourage. I think we must in every way encourage the introduction of new industries into the colony; and, as for the encouragement of the particular industry mentioned in this Bill, I think I shall be able to show the House before I sit down that the trifling sum which we are asked to vote is a mere nothing in comparison with the good it is likely to do. Honourable members come here and vote large sums of money as subsidies for carrying mails quickly; they vote thousands of pounds for the encouragement of the production of petroleum; they spend

hundreds of thousands of pounds on the gold fields and harbours, and in many other ways: but directly the proposal contained in this Bill comes before the House we are told that it is log-rolling. I can only say that I hope no worse log-rolling will take place in this House than that which is taking place in connection with this Bill. Something has been said by several honourable gentlemen about America. Well, I will show the House what has taken place in America during the last fifteen years. About fifteen years ago in America they thought they would undertake the production of sugar from sorghum as well as the production of sugar from the sugar-cane. Within the last fifteen years they have swelled the value of the annual production of sorghum sugar to over £19,000,000, and, although the Senate at first looked upon the project with disfavour, yet for the last five or six years they have voted \$20,000 annually for a school for educating people in the production of sugar from sorghum and maize. They have employed a Commissioner at a very high salary something like \$2,500 a year—and this Commissioner travels round the country with all the appliances necessary for the production of sugar from sorghum. He has a small mill and vacuum pans with him, everything, in fact, to teach the farmers how to produce the sugar; and, since that travelling Commissioner has been started, the trade has improved wonderfully, until, as I have said, the success of the industry has become so great as to be unparalleled. Nothing has ever been so successful as the sorghum- and maize sugar industry in America. Last year from the refuse of maise stalks alone they produced sugar to the value of not less than £8,000,000. This was produced from stuff that was perfectly useless before; and surely we can see that, if we can introduce such an industry into this colony, it must be of immense importance to us. In considering such a subject, what is the paltry id a pound on the sugar? If we can produce sugar to that extent in the colony, what an immense advantage it must be! Suppose a thousand tons of sugar is produced in the year, that would mean a loss to the Customs revenue of £4,600; but what is that loss, when considered in connection with the amount of labour that must be employed, and the consequent addition to the population of people who would all use dutiable articles to a large extent? The £4,600 lost would be a mere trifle as compared with what would be gained. The establishment of such an industry would at once tend to increase small settlement. A settler would be able to take up twenty or thirty acres of land and get a living off it. I am not speaking without knowing something of what I am talking about in this matter. I may say that, in conjunction with Judge Gillies, we produced the first marketable sugar ever produced in the We produced a first-class sample, too. Judge Gillies had failed for three years, and then he gave me the whole of the American books on the subject and asked me to try to do what I could. When I came to read the books

Mr. Buchanan

I saw at once where he had failed. He had l not followed out strictly the instructions that were given, and had failed to perceive that where sorghum exceeded a certain size it was useless for sugar-producing purposes. The same thing applies to beet. Roots beyond a certain number of inches round are discarded. He had manured too highly, and this was one of the causes of failure. It is one of the adwantages of this crop that it does not require manuring. In fact, manuring destroys the crop. You want to manure lightly. It is a crop which has been grown in America for fifteen years, and the ground grows quite as good a crop now as it did when it was first copped. The land does not get worked out. I am referring now to sorghum, but I have no doubt it would be the same with beet. I am entain that it might be profitably grown. When I made the experiment I put everything down, including the cost of labour, except, per-laps, a little that I put in myself, which I do not suppose was very valuable; but the result was £32 net per acre for the marketable stuff, without taking any account of the seed, which is one of the best horse-feeds in the world, and that kind of refuse which, in America, they burn to keep the mills going. We were almost afraid to state the result. In every way our results were better than the American ments, and I feel certain that it would pay plendidly. As I have said, we have in Auckand a sugar refinery, and, if the farmers grew sorghum, purified it to a certain extent, mrelled the stuff, and sent it into Auckland to the refinery, they would make a considerable am out of it. They would get a certain amount for their treacle, which would make he production very profitable. I have never bought such treacle as I have produced, and, having tasted the locally-produced treacle, I could realize the extent to which the imported article was adulterated. I was never surprised much at any results as those we obtained in Auckland. They have all been made public in the "Transactions of the New Zealand Institate." Dr. Hector visited my place and was astonished at what he saw. We have only to follow American methods, and, favoured by our position and our soil, we cannot help being successful. There is not so much trouble in cultivation. I was so careful to be exact in following the instructions in the books that I exefully measured the distances at which plants should be set. It is easily attended to when growing, and all that we did was to give it three scarifyings with a scarifier and one hand weeding. I do not know whether we worked better than any one else, but we had not a bit of trouble about the growth. The difficulties are overrated. We could cultivate difficulties are overrated. it, and the labourers themselves can do so. I wery sorry to have this question of labour always brought up by large proprietors. If we produce a thousand tons of sugar the loss to the Customs will be more than made up by the employment given to a larger population. Americans have proved what an immense succan be made out of this industry. If this

industry be successful you will certainly see the North Island go ahead in a way which I am sure will be very satisfactory to the South Islanders. We have been always accused of being a drag on the rest of the colony, but I am sure that with industries such as this you would soon alter that state of affairs. I have always argued that Englishmen are unable to try anything new. They get into grooves, and nothing will drive them out of those grooves except a charge of dynamite. I have always argued that the Government must come forward and show them how it can be done, and that then it will be done. Judge Gillies must have spent a very large sum of money in bringing out, at his own expense, the machinery for this manufacture, and yet he offered to make a present of it to any one who would try it. But no one would take it. The people said they preferred to sell their butter and eggs, and that they would not go to the trouble of testing it. Certainly at that time there was this difficulty: that the sugar wanted really to be condensed, to be driven off to the last extreme in a vacuum pan, to avoid the danger of burning. But that could be easily erected at the sugar refinery; and even people down South, if they have no refinery, could barrel up the treacle and send it to Auckland. I am sure we shall find that tens of thousands of men will grow their acre or two or three acres each, and set up small condensing pans, from which they can send it to the refinery, and they will reap an immense profit from it. At present we send immense sums of money out of the colony for sugar: we pay in duty alone the enormous sum of £91,000 at 1d. per pound; so that I think we must be sending nearly a million a year out of the colony for sugar. If we can produce sugar worth £100,000 in the colony in the next five or six years, I say that the Government will have done well in spending this small amount of £4,600 a year. It is the smallest argument I ever heard used to say that that small expenditure is going to affect the colony, and is going to injure the Customs revenue. I am quite sure that, in the course of time, we shall produce in the North Island large quantities of tobacco, oil, and tea, and that this question of labour will soon be got over. We shall find the labourers themselves and their families producing these articles. The honourable member for Inangahua made a great cry about exotic industries. Why, this is the very climate in which to grow beet and sorghum. They have made it an immense success in France and Belgium, and the Government of France gives all kinds of encouragement to it, even to testing the seed at its own expense. The industry has proved a great success in the United States, and, if they have overcome the labour difficulty, surely we ought also to overcome it, for the American labourer is surely as independent as the New Zealand labourer. I was rather surprised to hear one of the West Coast members kick up a row about this small subsidy. Those members seem to oppose the encouragement of this industry, because in their district they cannot grow these things. They

seem to think that the West Coast is the only place in the whole world. They talk about log-rolling, but, after my experience in this House, I think that is the last subject they should talk about. I think a great deal more of the encouragement of industries than I do of all the borrowing proposals of the Govern-ment. I feel that, if we encourage industries suitable to our climate and take advantage of our situation, we shall so increase our prosperity, so increase our population and revenue, that our taxation will be practically reduced to very little. If it were not for that hope I should take a very despondent view of the colony's future. I do not look to the South as much as to the North. I think, when the next census is taken, it will be found that the population of the North has increased very largely, and, if we can get these industries established, we shall have the largest population in the colony, and make taxation look like nothing at all. If we can double our population we can easily double our debt. When honourable members say we cannot do this and that, it seems to me that what they want to go into is something that will take no labour. They want to turn the colony into sheep-runs again. That seems to be the idea of some southern gentlemen. But that day is past; and we want to go into things which will employ our colonists on small farms. There are millions of acres in the North Island not fit even for sheep-runs; but, if we can encourage by legislation the introduction of a lot of these industries, I am quite certain that every acre of that immense area will be covered by successful colonists. I

am going to support this Bill most heartily.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE.—The effect produced upon my mind by the speeches of the honourable member for Franklin North and the Colonial Treasurer was that, if this industry is going to be so productive, if it is going to pay in so wonderful a manner, there is no occasion to pass the Bill before the House. The honourable member for Franklin North went on to prove, from his own practical experience, that he had netted £30 odd an acre from the growth

of sorghum. Mr. W. F. BUCKLAND .- I said that was the total result.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE.—The honourable member may have meant that, but he said the net result was £30 an acre. I am going to support this Bill also, strange as it may seem; but I have very grave doubt in my own mind whether this industry will be a success in this colony. I hope, in Committee, to be able to induce honourable members to make certain alterations in the Bill. I consider the principle of offering bonuses for the establishment of new industries in new countries is sound, and that it is not necessarily a policy of Protection. But the Bill proposes to give a much greater bonus to this industry than has ever been given to any other. As I read the Bill, it proposes to give a sum of not less than £4,600 of actual money in the shape of a bonus, and also to remit an equal amount in the shape of duty, amounting to something like £9,000 for

Mr. W. F. Buckland

the first year, and of course the bonus or assist ance to the industry will increase in every subsequent year in proportion to the quantity of sugar produced, because I understand the Bill to mean that no duty is to be collected on locally-produced sugar. Now, if the Treasurer had contented himself by saying that no duty should be collected upon sugar manufactured in New Zealand from sorghum, beet, or anything else, for ten or fifteen years, that would be a reasonable proposition. Some remarkable speeches have been made on this subject. The honourable member for Inangahua astonished me greatly. He said we should not encourage any exotic industry whilst we had so many indigenous industries in the colony; and he then went on to speak of what he chose to call a new indigenous industry - namely, the export of frozen mutton. I never knew the sheep was a native of New Zealand; I thought that useful and ornamental animal was imported. And I take it that the wool and meat industry is the principal industry of the colony. Gold, coal, timber, gum, and fungus are about the only indigenous industries. I think there was nothing whatever in the remarks of the honourable member for Inangahua that was pertinent to the Bill. With regard to what fell from the honourable member for Cheviot, I was extremely pleased to hear his interesting history of his agricultural pursuits in France; but he seemed to miss the point under discussion altogether. Being a farmer like himself —although in a much humbler sphere than his is now—I would point out that I believe if he had fed his five cows in Brittany, not on the pulp of the mangolds, but on the roots themselves, he would have found it more profitable, because I presume that the saccharine matter extracted from the roots goes largely towards the production of milk and butter. The Colonial Treasurer made, as he always does, a very exhaustive speech, and also a very one-sided speech. He traced the introduction and rise of this industry on the Continent, and told us of the wonderful results in France, Germany, and other countries; but he did not tell us that within the last six months fifty sugar factories in France alone have been closed, and the whole of this class of industry in France this moment is in imminent danger of being superseded by that of other countries. The growth of this beet-root industry throughout the length and breadth of the world at the present moment is something wonderful. During the last few years it has been growing to an enormous extent, and it seems to me that there is now going on a great battle between the sugar grown from these articles and that grown from the common sugar-cane, and that, as far as one can see, the beet-root sugar is likely to gain the day. Appliances are being made to take away from it its objectionable features, and to make it in all respects equal to cane sugar. To such an extent has this grown all over the world that cane-producing countries are waking up to the fact that their interests are being dangerously interfered with, and they are appointing Commissions and

1884.] making all sorts of inquiries to see whether some means cannot be devised by which they may be able to hold their own, and compete with the beet-sugar in the markets of the world. Germany alone produces more sugar than England consumes of all descriptionswhether cane, beet, or any other. Then, again, the fall in the price of sugar during the last ten years has been something enormous.
Within the last financial period British merchants have lost four millions sterling on their mgar stocks. With these facts staring us in the face, I think it is very doubtful whether New Zealand will be able to compete in this industry with other countries where it is already so well established. Now, Sir, the whole of the facts on which the Colonial Treasurer based his argument as to this being so suitable a country for the production of beet-sugar, are to be found in a small pamphlet which I hold in my hand, called "Beet-mot Sugar Manufacture," by William Austalia Graham, a gentleman who has given meat attention to this subject, collected a lot of information, and put it into the form of a pamphlet for the information of honourable gentlemen and for the good of the human race generally; but the whole of the assertions with which Mr. Graham fills his pamphlet are based on what I call theoretical experiments. is to say, there have never yet been made sufficent experiments in this beet-root sugar manufacture to satisfy a practical man that we can produce it in this country at such a price that we can not only supply our own demands but compete with other countries in the markets of the world. I am not myself a great believer in chemical analysis, although no doubt, from a scientific point of view, it is perfectly correct; and I venture to think that, if this industry is ever gone into in New Zealand, a very much less percentage will be obtained from the root than is shown in the analysis of Mr. Pond, of Auckland. Those who are, or have been, interested in gold-mining—and the honourable member for Franklin North, too—well know what a great difference there is between the return from a sample of quartz which is sent to be tested and that which is obtained from the quartz-battery; and I very much fear that the same will be the result of the return from the manufacture of this beet sugar, when com-pared with the analysis which has been made m Auckland. I have endeavoured to think this subject out, and I have asked myself, Is this an industry suitable to the colony, to our climate, and to the circumstances of the people, as we find them at present in New Zealand? And I may say that I entirely agree with the honourable member for Franklin North when he says that, if ever New Zealand is to become the great country we expect her to be, we must have other industries than those of wool-production, sheep- and cattle-raising, and those larger industries which are confined to the hands of the landed aristocracy of the country. If we are ever to make this a prosperous country we must have what I may call

amount of work on a small piece of ground, can make a livelihood for himself and his family, and accumulate some wealth. I do not want my family to grow up as slaves to men like my honourable friend the member for Wakanui, but that they may, from some such industry as the beet sugar, make a moderate livelihood on a small area of ground. If we cannot do that, this country is not worth living in. There are some reasons which present themselves to my mind why, under existing circumstances, this industry is not likely to be successful. One is the extremely low price at which stock is valued in the colony at the present moment. No doubt one of the reasons why this industry is so very valuable elsewhere is that the refuse from the manufacture is useful for the production of beef and mutton. Now, here bullocks will not pay for the price of the grass, and there is no immediate prospect of any better result from the keeping of sheep. We know that where sheep are grown a very good plan is adopted whereby labour can be saved. Sheep are turned into the enclosures in which are the articles on which they feed, persons feed hogs in large quantities they grow peas and other things of that sort; but they do not take the trouble to harvest them, but just simply turn the hogs in amongst them and let them feed there. We are told that the agricultural industries are very much depressed at present, and yet these means are resorted to to save labour and expense. Now, the utilizing of the refuse from this sugar industry must entail not only its removal from the manufactory, but also the distributing it over the paddocks where the cattle and other stock are; and, that being the case, I do not think we can depend on such a return from this refuse as has been said. Sir, I shall give this Bill my support in the direction I have indicated, and for these reasons: that I recognize that this country is not now discussing the question of Free-trade and Protection, and that we have, by past legislation, established the principle that we as a colony are prepared to give bonuses and to offer inducements to people to start new industries. We have already, at no distant date, passed a law remitting the duty on tobacco grown in the colony to the extent of 2s. 6d. in the pound; we have placed duties upon all imported woollen goods, with the avowed object of encouraging woollen manufactures in the colony; we have imposed an import duty on hops, with the avowed object of encouraging certain districts to enter upon the cultivation of them; we have imposed duties on jam, with the avowed object of encou-raging the manufacture of jam; we have taxed bacon, and placed duties on chicory and other things, with the avowed object of encouraging their production here; and I say that we have no right to reverse our policy now, and say that in the matter of sugar we will not do the same. The matter of Customs revenue does not enter into my mind in considering this question. If this colony is to sidering this question. If this colony is to produce beet-root sugar, not only to supply

Sugar Bill.

our own requirements, but also to compete with other countries in foreign markets, then the question of Customs duties is neither here nor there. Of course this measure may have the effect of increasing the price of sugar to the consumer up to a certain pitch, and no doubt in that respect the Bill is bad; but, if the industry is going to be successful, it will not have that effect for long after we have produced as much sugar as we can consume ourselves. But I should like to know why these two articles are to be the only ones to have protection, and why protection should not be extended over anything from which sugar can be produced. Who can tell but that some wonderful discovery may be made within the next year or two whereby we may make sugar from something else? I was reading not long ago a description that the Americans made magnums of champagne out of the refuse of petroleum; and, if that can be done, I do not see why we may not yet be able to make sugar out of sawdust. I think the Bill should be amended in the direction I have indicated, and, if that be acceded to, I shall be happy to give it all the support I can.

Mr. COWAN.—As a member representing an agricultural constituency I have very much pleasure in supporting this Bill. I may say that only a week ago I met a gentleman in Wellington who informed me that he had come to this country recently, representing European capitalists, with a view of starting this industry. He was sent to me, as a representative of a Southland electorate, with regard to a particular district there to which he had been directed as suitable for this purpose. To that district he has gone. This gentleman told me that what he desired was a piece of country of from three thousand to five thousand acres in extent. It must be inland, it must be connected with a railway, and the climate must be pretty moist during the growing time. The quality of the soil was not a very great consideration to him, because he said that, in his experience of growing beet for the manufacture of sugar, unless chemical manures were applied to the soil the result was not satisfactory. Here is a representative of capitalists in our country looking about with a view of finding a spot on which to establish this industry on a very large scale. I think that the chief provision in this Bill is not new to the Legislature of New Zealandcamely, that of offering a bonus for the esta-Mishment of a new industry. That is a prin-iple to which I believe this House will offer no very great objection in considering this Bill. because successful industries which we have now in operation, so far as my knowledge goes, have been more or less subsidized at their start by the Government. This Bill provides for a subsidy for the first one thousand tons of sugar produced from beet grown in this country, which, totted up, represents a considerable amount of money; but I believe, considering the benefit that would accrue to the colony, that sum is insignificant. There-

fore, seeing that this Bill has for its object the fostering of an industry which will be an addition to the producing-power of the country, it is one to which I have very much pleasure in giving my support, and I trust that the House will to-night indorse the endeavours made by the Colonial Treasurer in this direction by also

giving it their support.
Dr. NEWMAN.—Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to detain the House long, but I cannot help suggesting the curious way in which legislation is sometimes done in this House. Something like thirteen or fourteen years ago the question was debated in this House, and then there came a period when there went up a cry that the great want of the colony was a free breakfast-table, and to do away with the tea and sugar duties; and, when a very great Liberal party came into power, they took 2d. off tea and 1d. off sugar, and that was to do the working people a great amount of good; and, had they seen their way to do it, they would have taken off the remaining 1d. But, when the consumption of sugar is daily increasing, it is proposed to continue this duty on sugar, thereby not relieving the working people in this respect. But, Sir, there is another curious thing in this debate this evening, and that is that honourable members seem to think that the maintenance of Ad. duty on sugar is going to work a revolution, and is going to cover all the fields of the northern part of this Island with white beet. Honourable gentlemen who talk like that overlook one fact, and that is the rise and fall in the price of sugar. It has already come down from £10 to £7 per ton. The cause is not difficult to seek. China has taken to sending sugar to the colony, and within the last two months sugar has gone down ad. per lb.; so that, with a protection of dd. per lb., the poor farmers would find that, instead of this Bill being a boon to them, they would be losers by the measure. Anybody who has read the subject up, who has read of the large areas in Northern American the large areas in Northern Australia which are open to cultivation, and who knows the cheapness with which these things are now produced—the cheapness of freight, and so on—and also knows that from China there is going to be sent down to these colonies a very large amount of sugar—any one who knows these things must know that ½d. per pound on sugar will be to the beet-producers of this Island a very great delusion indeed for many years to come; and I hope the farmers of New Zealand will not be led away by the discussion which has taken place in this House. Let no one fall into the mistake of thinking that this d. per pound will be any protection to them. because, as surely as we sit here, we know that sugar can be poured into the colony from all parts—from China, and Northern Australia, and other places—and the price of sugar will go down still further.

Mr. ROSS.—I am of opinion that a liberal bonus given on the establishment of any industry is money well spent; but on this occasion it does not appear to be necessary to give any bonus at all, after what we have heard from

Mr. Hursthouse



the honourable member for Hokonui, who says that there is a gentleman in the colony who is anxious to enter on the production of sugar on a large scale from beet-root. We ought to consider what this proposal is going to cost the colony. It appears to me that it is not the bonus on the first 1,000 tons of sugar that will be the only consideration. The actual cost will be £74,666 13s. 4d., made up as follows:—

Amount of bonus on the first 1,000 tons of sugar produced, at \( \frac{1}{2} \)d. per lb. ... Assuming that 1,000 tons will be produced annually—and if the

produced annually—and if the quantity produced does not reach this figure the industry is scarcely worth establishing—then in 15 years the concession in respect of duty will amount to 15,000 tons, at ½d. per lb.

. 70,000 0 0

4,666 13 4

Total .. ..£74,666 13 4

There is one feature in the Bill to which I have a very great objection, and that is that, if the duty upon sugar is abolished—and this House, taking into consideration the distress prevailing among the working-classes, may at any moment abolish duties on sugar and on the necessaries of life—immediately it is abolished the colony is pledged to pay the persons who produce sugar the sum of £4,666 18s. 4d. in cash on every 1,000 tons of sugar manufactured during the fifteen years over which the concession extends. That is a very objectionable feature. Now, the Mosgiel Woollen Mills were assisted by a bonus of some £1,500 or £2,000, and if a similar bonus were to be given for the establishment of an industry of this kind—the manufacture of sugar from beet-root—I think there could be no objection to it. However, I will not further detain the House. I only thought it my duty to lay before the House the figures which I have quoted.

Mr. LAKE. — Sir, I do not wish to detain the House very long, especially as the honourable member for Motueka has cut away nearly all the arguments to which I had intended to refer. I cannot help noticing, although to some extent I am in favour of this Bill, some of the arguments that have been used. The honourable member for Franklin North has told us that in the northern parts of Auckland District you can grow a sorghum with some probability of success owing to the higher rate of temperature that prevails there. But his experience, like that of most others, has been confined to patches. He tells us that if we start this industry we have no right to think of this 4d. duty; but he must remember this: that this duty comes to something very close to 20 per cent on present prices, and I do not think that at all a trifling duty. He also tells us—and I believe that what he says about that is quite right—that it would take almost a charge of dynamite to blow the New Zealand farmers out of the grooves into which they had got.

It will take a greater power, in my opinion, to drive away a protective duty when once you resort to it, and that is one reason why I object to this Bill. If I thought that the Colonial Treasurer could see his way to modify this Bill by offering even an increased bonus of £5,000 for sugar-production, I should be perfectly satisfied that he should do so, rather than impose a protective duty, for I am sure that the result of imposing a protective duty will be this: that at the end of the fifteen years we shall have a section of the population crying out that they must be remembered, that they have been brought into existence by this duty, and that we are bound to continue it in order to carry on this industry. And I hope I shall never give my aid towards establishing even the weakest plant of Protection. It has been said that bonuses are but a concealed form of Protection; and so they are, perhaps, as far as they go. But at the outset we know what we have to pay, which is not the case if you grant a protective duty; and even the most enthusiastic Free-trader might make a compromise to such an extent as to support the granting of a bonus to this industry. The the granting of a bonus to this industry. member for Hokonui has already told us, however, that, without any bonus, and without any Id. duty, a gentleman is already in the colony looking out and trying to ascertain whether he cannot make it pay by himself. So far as our experience in the Waikato is concerned, I may say that a few years ago a gentleman who has compiled a little handbook, which I have taken the liberty of placing in members' pigeon-holes —Mr. Graham—and who took a very great deal of trouble over this matter, being quite an enthusiast regarding it, very nearly succeeded in bringing about an arrangement which would have had the effect of introducing this in-dustry without any bonus whatever. The only thing we fell out about was the price per ton. I think, however, the thing would have come about, but they also required the farmers to take a certain share in the capital, which was not a thing that the farmers were able or were willing to do. And therefore I think it is not at all true that it is necessary to give so gigantic an inducement, which, as the honourable member for Roslyn has shown, amounts in reality to a considerable sum, namely, £74,666, including bonus and duty on 1,000 tons yearly. There are also, perfectly apart from the question of protection or the desirability of introducing this industry, one or two other more practical questions, which possibly might have a greater bearing on the subject than some of those I have already named. First of all, there is the question of the cost of growing as against the productive power. Now, I think the evidence shows very clearly that, though in the Waikato we can grow beet containing a large percentage of sugar, yet, if you once begin to manure the land, you lower the percentage so that you cannot count on more than fifteen tons to the acre. Taking the cost of growth, raising, and carting to the factory, there is not a large margin left at the price of 15s. per ton, and that is more than the firm with which negotiations were entered into was willing to give. There is also another question that will operate in this, and especially in my district—the question of cartage. In Canterbury, where the roads are good, it may be a thing of no importance; but in the Waikato, where the roads are bad, and you have to cart it at the worst time of the year, the matter becomes of great con-sequence. If, too, you do not use the pulp, you take away one element that, theoretically, is supposed to give a profit—one of those elements which mislead us in our calculations. France the pulp has been used in the feeding of cattle, mixed with other food; but at present our cattle will not pay us a fair percentage on the ordinary pasture of the country, and it will not pay to cart the pulp back to the farm to be there given to the cattle. All calculations as to the value of the pulp must be eliminated from the estimate of profit. There is also another question in point, which it appears to me we are hardly considering. The Colonial Treasurer and a great many other gentlemen have told us of a future—and I hope that future is to come—which is to belong to us from extended trade with the islands of the Pacific. If we are going to develop this trade, we cannot expect to send our ships away empty. We cannot be like France. Her beet-root industries were supported by a duty like 20 per cent being put on, and by this means they hoped not only to render themselves inde-pendent of British West India produce, but to reduce England's maritime power. If we are situated close to semi-tropical climates, from which we can obtain sugar at a cheaper rate than we can produce it for here, I do not see how an industry like this could succeed. For our frozen mutton, our cheese, and other products, we must look somewhere else for a market besides England. There the farmers are now weighted with the competition of Chili, India, and Australia, and wheat-growing seems to have been brought to a pitch that cannot afford a profit. There may be—and cannot afford a profit. There may be—and will be—a very large carrying trade in the interchange of commodities between New Zealand and the islands of the Pacific, Queensland, and possibly India, for I hope it will not be very long before New Zealand will prove able to supply India with cavalry-horses, and many other things which India wants, and which she can pay well to obtain. I doubt very much whether this industry, if established, may not be a drawback from the advantages which I hope New Zealand will obtain from its position as a maritime country—a country which ought to export its products to tropical countries and bring back sugar, rather than attempt to compete with them by the growth of sugarbeet. If I could see any chance of this protection being knocked off and a handsome bonus given, I should vote for this Bill; but, if it is covered with a protective duty, I shall vote against it.

Mr. MONTGOMERY.—I wish to say one or two words before the debate closes. Other honourable gentlemen have gone into this matter exhaustively, and I shall not repeat

the arguments they have used. The Bill contains something good and something very bad. The 2nd clause is a good one, under which a bonus is to be given. I think all of us will be agreed that bonuses should be given, even though we may be Free-traders. I myself am inclined for Protection, and therefore I agree with the 3rd clause, which provides that there shall be no Excise duty upon the sugar manufactured as long as the import duty does not exceed id. per pound. I do not think it at all likely that it will ever exceed that; I do not think the people of the country would stand it. I object to the provision of the Bill which states that, for fifteen years, the people must pay \(\frac{1}{2}\)d. per pound as an import duty. Why should we pass a law by which we say we shall not be able to reduce the duty on imported sugar? I remember that we were going to do a good deal by the manufacture of whiskey. I understand the whiskey was not good, but the colony was glad to pay £20,000 to get out of the bargain. I do not want to see that repeated in the colony. I have no objection to anything being manufactured here without an Excise duty. For instance, take the matter of hops. We are instance, take the matter of hops. We are not bound to the hop-growers that we will never take the impost off. I object to entering into an obligation such as that which this Bill imposes upon us. I shall vote for the second reading, as I am in favour of fostering local industries and protecting them by an import duty, and leaving them free of an Excise duty; but I shall vote against the 4th clause, and, if that is carried in Committee, I shall vote against the third reading of the Bill.

Mr. MOSS.—It must be very gratifying to those who hold strong views upon the propriety of encouraging native industries - or young industries, if you like—to find that some have had the courage to stand up and express their opinions upon that point. When the debate opinions upon that point. When the debate began it seemed to me that the House was full of honourable members who were Free-traders, or who called themselves Free-traders, because in reality there is no such thing as Free-trade in New Zealand, or, one might almost say, in the world. High duties age levied in the Custom-houses everywhere, and, so long as these duties remain, so long, I presume, we can hardly be said to have arrived at the age of Freetrade. There are high duties levied in England still, especially on English lights and land still, especially on English liquors, and articles of that sort. What struck me in the debate more particularly was this: The honourable member for Cheviot gave us a very interesting account of the production of beet-root and its manufacture into sugar in France; and it was said that the honourable gentleman, when doing that, had lost sight of the main point. But to me it seemed that he had struck the point exactly. What he was showing to us was the high perfection to which the production of beet-root had attained in a country where it had been protected from the first, and in a country which was the parent of this industry. And he might have gone on to tell us that without that Protection it would have

been impossible it could have flourished. We all know how beet-sugar was first produced. We all know that it took its origin when the sigar colonies of France were closed against her—when England had taken a large num-ber of them and succeeded in blockading the rest, so that France had no sugar—and we know that chemists were set to work, and that they ascertained that sugar could be obtained from beet-root; and enormous import duties were put on, and bonuses given for the production of sugar. We know, too, that these enormous bonuses are given to this day, especially for export, and it is because the French are exporting so largely, relying on these bonuses, that the sugar-growing colonies of England complain now that the English market is practically closed against them. In They say, England they put up with this. "We get our sugar more cheaply, and are satis-fied." But if England were full of sugargrowers, if there were thousands and thousands of small farmers depending on the manufacture of sugar there, I venture to say they would not put up with it, but would put on a corre-sponding duty to keep French sugar out. The reference that has been made to the export of sugar-from France into England therefore will have no bearing upon the proposed growth of beet-root in New Zealand. That there are some evils in Protection is manifest. No one denies that it creates vested interests, as the honourable member for Waipa has said, and that they become a great trouble occasionally. But look at the enormous good it does. Has any nation ever yet succeeded in this world in forming itself into a nation without Protection in its early days? I know of none. No people in this world have succeeded in building themselves up into a nation without a system of Protection more or less stringentoften more stringent. We cannot look to England as an example of the contrary. England owes nearly all to Protection, and Protection of the most stringent nature. Then, we are told that Protection has injured the shipping industry of the United States. What has ruined the same industry in Canada? Canada was a Free-trade country until quite recently, when they adopted Protection. But they lost the shipping trade long before they accepted Protection. So we can hardly say it is Protection that has ruined the shipping trade in the United States. Then, there is another statement which would seem to be relied on very much in opposition to this Bill—that you are forcing capital out of its natural channel; that by your interference you take capital from the pursuits to which it would naturally be applied, and misplace it in another direction. But that has been triumphantly answered tonight in the speech of the honourable member for Hokonui. That honourable gentleman showed at once the fallacy of that notion that there would be any displacement of capital, as the capital would be brought into the country. That is one of the fundamental errors, to my mind, which one constantly hears in connection with the doctrines of those who call

themselves especially Free-traders. trine, I know, comes down to us from very high authority; but I venture to say that the great authority who maintained it treated. all the world as one nation. His was an abstract view. He treated all the world as if it were one nation, and of course, looking at it from that point of view, there would be a displacement of capital; but in this colony the principle seems to be quite inapplicable. New industries started here are not started by old capital, but by capital brought in from other countries; and therefore I hold that this great argument falls entirely to the ground. The only point I think we ought to consider when questions of this kind are brought before us is the one of expediency. Is it an industry that is likely to succeed? Have we any proof that it has been fairly tried? Do we know anything at all about it? On these points, Sir, I think that we certainly are a good deal in the dark upon the particular industry before us. If it is one which there is a prospect of establishing in this country, I, for my part, would be the last to complain if it should cause us to pay a little higher for sugar at its starting. think that a sacrifice made in that direction is always one of the sacrifices which ought to be, and I believe always are, most cheerfully borne. Most people would never complain of being taxed a little more highly, if they knew that their tax was laying the foundation of industries in which they, and their children afterwards, would be employed, and which to them would bring bread. The temporary sacrifice they make is as nothing compared with the permanent good that they will derive. Nor ought we to forget that we do not propose to grow sugar as an article of export. I believe that what has been said on that point to-night is most convincing. We cannot hope to export it and to compete successfully in other countries either with the cane sugar or the homegrown. But look what a field we have in this country for its sale, if the growth and manufacture be as practicable as we are told. Why, we could consume here even now at the very least half a million pounds' worth of such sugar. Is it not worth while to try to grow it for our own consumption? And what an im-mense gain there is in this particular article if we could only acclimatize it! For it is an article that can be grown by small producers: it does not require a large capital or large areas of land, but would be a home industry, and find employment for those who most need it—the small producers of this country. are told that produce of all kinds is falling in price, and that sugar must fall too; and some honourable gentlemen argue that, if this continues, labour must fall also, and that, unless labour falls, we cannot hope to produce these articles. But I maintain that it is not labour that must necessarily fall. If the prices of the articles we produce continue to fall—if, in fact, they do not recover—it is the land that will also suffer. That is the direction in which I think the fall is most likely to take place. I believe strongly that it is more than politic214

that it is the absolute duty—of a new country to encourage in every possible way the growth of new productions and the establishment of new manufactures: in fact, I think that the very life of a new country is to develop to the utmost of our power the attractions of the home market; that, without that home market, and without encouraging the local productions, you cannot have skilled labour, and that the mere production of raw materials is only a very small part of the work of a nation. It is the skilled labour which makes the national wealth; and that skilled labour has in all countries depended for its origin upon the Protection which is now so much derided. But, Str, talking of the Bill itself, while I should certainly vote for its second reading, believing firmly in the principle, I am bound to add that I could not possibly support, in Committee, the last clause. To give the bonus, if it were double the amount, I should think would be a very small affair, if by so doing we could establish a new industry; and we have to remember that, till the industry is established, the bonus will not be paid: but it is a very different thing to bind ourselves to fetter our fiscal policy, and to say that for fifteen years we will make no change, no reduction, in the duty now levied on sugar. To be able to do that, only by sacrificing d. in the pound to all who may grow sugar, seems to be unreasonable and unnecessary. I hope this clause will be eliminated from the Bill. Those who undertake to produce beet-root sugar ought to be satisfied, and I believe they would be satisfied, to find that the Bill gives them the freedom from Excise duty at the starting. They must do as those who have established woollen factories and have gone into similar things have had to do: they must be content to trust to the good faith of Parliament that it will not lightly or suddenly alter the duty without some regard for their interests. I should be perfectly satisfied, if that clause were made to apply to some shorter period, that the Bill might, and possibly would, do a very great deal of good, and could not do any harm; but to agree that the fiscal policy of the country shall be fettered for so long a period seems to be quite unreasonable. I shall not trouble the House with any further remarks. It is now getting near half-past one o'clock, and I hope some other honourable entleman will take up the debate now, or, at all events, move for its adjournment. The all events, move for its adjournment. subject is a very large one, and there must be many other honourable members who would like to have an opportunity of expressing their views upon it. The debate has taken a very wide range, and I venture to say has taken a very interesting turn. It will be a very good opportunity for other honourable members who entertain views on this question of Protection and Free-trade, as the question has been so prominently raised in the debate, to enforce them, and to enable us to see how the two parties stand in this House, for they are des-tined to be, before many years, the two parties into which this Parliament will be divided.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—Sir, I should like to move the adjournment of this debate. It is not very encouraging speaking at this hour of the night to so few members. But, at the same time, if the House is not to be adjourned, I shall say what I have to say.

Mr. MOSS.—Adjourn the debate. Mr. STOUT.—No.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—If there is any objection on the part of the Government, I shall not move the adjournment of the debate, as the Government want to get on with the business. The debate has certainly been a very interesting one in many respects, and in no respect has it been more interesting to me than in this: that the honourable members who began by declaring themselves out-and-out Protectionists, ended by saying that they intended to vote against all the Protection clauses in the Bill. They did not object to the bonus clause; they would give two bonuses, if necessary; but they could not consent to fetter the fiscal policy of the country with the clause that contains the protective element. I can-not understand that. The honourable gentleman who has spoken last, and the honourable member for Akaroa, both told us they are Protectionists, and spoke warmly in favour of the Bill, but both ended by saying they would not vote for that clause.

An Hon. MEMBER.—Merely as regards the fifteen years.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—As regards the principle, it appears to me that they ought to go for the Bill and for the whole Bill, for the reason that it is an out-and-out Protectionist Bill. There is no doubt that this Bill is Protection in its fullest form, and, in my opinion, in its most dangerous because in its most delusive and insinuating form, and for that reason I intend to oppose the Bill. I do not hesitate to say, here or anywhere else, that I am a thorough-going Free-trader. The honouram a thorough-going Free-was no able member for Parnell told us there was no such thing as a Free-trader. Well, Sir, he beholds one before him now. He tells us that there is no country in the world where the principle is carried to its legitimate extent. will give one instance that has been brought into very great prominence of late years, and that is the British Colony of the Straits Settlement. In that country—the most prosperous colony of the Empire—there is not and never has been a customhouse. There never has been a shilling of import duty levied in that colony: and what is the result? The result is that it is the most prosperous colony in the Empire—that they have no public debt, and out of the surplus revenue they have been enabled to construct enormous public works; and they have never collected one shilling of Customs duties. There is one Free-trade country, with a great population—an exceedingly prosperous population—and it is the most prosperous colony under the British Crown.

An Hon. MEMBER.—What are its circumstances?

Mr. WAKEFIELD. - Sir, I am not going

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into all the circumstances of this case, for the | reason that honourable gentlemen have not gone into the circumstances of other cases. I have been asked to give an instance, and I have given the most striking instance within the known range of political economy; because there, Sir, the principle is carried to its legiti-mate issue, and the result is astonishing to any unprejudiced mind. I believe we are adopting an exceedingly wrong step in passing this Bill. There are some honourable gentlemen, in fact a good many, who have said in this debate that they intend to support the Bill on account of the principle of bonuses; that they were dead against the protective clauses and did not mean to support them, but would support the Bill on account of the principle it contains that a bonus shall be given for the first thousand tons of sugar. Now, I ask those honourable gentlemen to consider this: Do they want a Bill in order to give this bonus? Sir, are honourable members of this House aware that ever since 1880 there has been a bonus of £1,000 standing in the Gazette for the first 125 tons of beet-root sugar? You do not want a Bill passed to allow you to offer bonuses. The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, in speaking on the subject, mentioned M. De Harven, and dwelt on the benefit it would prove to have Belgian colonization in New Zealand; and I believe that great results would follow M. De Harven's efforts. The Treasurer told us about M. De Harven's efforts on behalf of Belgian colonization in New Zealand, and he told us that was a strong reason why the Bill should be passed. Now, I hold in my hand M. De Harven's work, "La Nouvelle-Zélande," in which the whole of his observations on New Zealand are stated; and among the other inducements he lays before people in Belgium to come to New Zealand is the fact that there is a bonus of £1,000 offered for the production of the first 125 tons of beet-root sugar here. That book, published in 1883, draws attention to the fact that since 1880 an offer of a bonus has been standing, and is to be taken advantage of by enterprising Belgians or any one else. Now, we have to-night seen the Treasurer crowned with laurels and heard most enthusiastic eulogies passed upon him for bringing in Bill proposing this bonus. Is it reasonable to proceed in such a way? Sir, I may say, without the slightest egotism, that I was in part the author of the offer of a bonus for beet-rootsugar production. Reference to the Appendices to the Journals of 1880 will show that the Royal Commission on Local Industries, of whom I was Chairman, went into the question at some length, and that this offer was made on our recommendation. No one has ever given me any commendation for that, and I suppose no one ever will; but such is the fact. In M. De Harven's work, the offer of a bonus and all the advantages offered by the colony for beet-root-sugar production are enumerated: this is a book published by the Antwern Geographical Society in 1883. That Antwerp Geographical Society in 1883. bonus might have been taken up at any time, and the reason that it has not been claimed is,

no doubt, that it has been found more profitable to employ capital in other directions.

Sugar Bill.

An Hon. MEMBER.—It is insufficient.

Mr. WAKEFIELD .- There has been nothing in the world to prevent the Government multiplying it by four, raising it from £1,000 to £4,000. That could be done simply by another Gasette notice. There was not the least occasion for a Bill, if only a bonus was to be offered. Of course, if we are coming to a policy of Protection a law is required. But I do hope this House is not going to be led into imposing on this colony the incubus of Protection simply through a side-wind of this kind. If we are to have Protection, let us have a clear and straightforward proposal brought down by the Government. Let them take the responsibility of the whole thing—let them say, "We purpose adopting a protective system as the fiscal system of the colony." But do not let us, by a little Bill of this kind, be led into imposing that system, which, to my mind, is the most fatal any country can adopt. I am very much afraid that it is the protective element in the Bill which is its charm to the Government. Now, my reason for that is, that the Government have not said whether they approve the bonus system or not. I will read to honourable gentlemen an extract from a letter written by a gentleman whom I am sure we shall all recognize as a great authority on the question of beet-root, a gentleman who has studied the subject many years, who was the first, I think, to bring it before this House, and who has persisted ever since in urging it on the attention of the House. That great authority is dead against the system of bonuses. He says upon it,

"All efforts to establish beet-sugar manufacture by bonuses have failed, and, I venture to say, have naturally and fortunately failed. There are two great objections to bonuses: they work for too limited a time, and they create

monopolies."

Sir, that great authority is Sir Julius Vogel, the present Colonial Treasurer. That was in his letter to the Premier, dated June 14, 1880. Now he brings down a Bill in which he offers a bonus of £4,000 for the first 1,000 tons of beet-root sugar, and a continuous bonus for fifteen years.

An Hon. Member.—No.

Mr. WAKEFIELD. - Well, it is in the nature of a continuous bonus.

Mr. STOUT .- No.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—Well, why put it in the Bill? Look at the side-note to the 4th clause; "If import duty reduced or removed, bonus to be paid in equivalent." Very well, I ask any honourable gentleman of common-sense whether this Bill does not introduce a bonus system as one of the elements of encouraging this industry. Yet we find the author of this Bill emphatically and absolutely condemning the bonus system in 1880 in the remarkable words I have read to the House. suppose the Treasurer has altered his opinion at all about the bonuses; but I think he knows as well as I do that hundreds—aye, 216

thousands-of people will allow the principle of Protection to be imposed upon them under the guise of bonuses, who would not for a moment listen to it unless it was brought in under that guise; and he, anxious to introduce a system of Protection, introduces it under the guise of a system to which, personally, he has the strongest objection. Sir, it has always been the case, and I suppose it always will be to the end of time, that Protectionists will never come out in their true colours, but will use every possible method they can adopt for bringing in Protection without allowing those on whom they wish to impose it to know they are bringing it in. That is the case here, and I object to this Bill because it is not a straightforward measure. As I have said, if only a bonus is to be offered, we do not want a Bill at all: if it is only a question of amount, nothing is easier than for the Government to increase the amount. On the other hand, if it is Protection we are asked to adopt, then the Government should say so plainly. speech of the Colonial Treasurer he never once alluded to the fiscal aspect of the Bill. He gave us a vast amount of matter as to the origin of the industry, and his observations on the experience of growers in different countries. He went to an infinity of pains to occupy the attention of the House with all these matters; but he never for a single moment allowed the attention of the House to rest on the most important question of all—the fiscal question—involved in this Bill. Now, I say that, in his position as Colonial Treasurer, and also as the author of this Bill, it was his duty plainly to tell the House that it was his proposition to enter upon a course of Protection. This is my main objection to the Bill: that it is a Protection policy. I myself highly approve of offering bonuses to these industries, because I think they will often induce capitalists and others to take up an industry which they otherwise would not take up. We have been very successful indeel in some instances with these bonuses, and I have not the least objection to offering this bonus, although it seems a rather large sum-£4,000 for the first 1,000 tons. I do not know that it is too much; I do not object to that; but we do not need this Bill to give that bonus, and for that reason I shall oppose its second reading. But I am dead against this proposal to place a protective duty on beetroot and sorghum sugar. I am quite sure that it will have the result of bringing a flood of similar claims to this House. Let any one look at the evidence given to the Local Industries Commission in 1880. An impression got abroad -an entirely mistaken one—that the Commission was appointed with a view to the introduction of a protective tariff, and the result was that at every place the Commissioners were met by applications from persons wishing to have their industries promoted by means of Protection. Honourable gentlemen who read the evidence will find the most curious facts there. They will find, for instance, that one man showed that a very great industry in pickles might be made in New Zealand if we

put on a duty of 25 per cent. Another gentl man, almost immediately after, came as showed that there would be a great industry: glass bottles if they were protected by a du of 25 per cent. But, when we asked the pick man what would be the result of that, he tol us it would crush the pickle industry unless w took off the duty on bottles; and, if we did no put the duty on bottles, it would crush th bottle industry. And so it went on, till w found that, if a protective duty was once begu it would go all round, till at last all the indu tries in the colony except the actually ind genous industries would have to be protecte by a protective duty. Undoubtedly it would to so here; undoubtedly you would have further claims for the protection of industries, and cannot see with what justice you are going t The honourable member fo refuse them. Wakanui mentioned the linseed industry as most important one. That is a matter I hav gone into considerably, and I myself have bee the originator of an establishment for that in dustry in my own district. Not a word ha fallen from the Colonial Treasurer, nor from the most enthusiastic supporters of this Billnot even from the honourable member for Che viot-in favour of the beet industry that coulnot be said in favour of the linseed industry That is also one of the mainstays of Bel gium; it is an industry which there support a vast population on a small area of ground and in some cases it yields as much as £100 per acre net profit. I could produce statistic about linseed; I could reel them off by the yard, just as the Treasurer did about beet The facts or theories about the production o linsced in New Zealand are quite as startling as those about beet, and even more so. They show that no country in the world produce so much linseed to the acre as New Zealand. There are other circumstances very startling indeed with regard to that industry; and I say that, if you protect this beetroot industry, it is as certain as possible that you will have a claim for the protection of the linseed industry. We have opened a linseed factory in my own district, which we hope will be a success. It is conducted on free-trade principles, and those who are concerned in the undertaking have not the slightest expectation of any Government assistance at all. But, if you are going to protect this beet-sugar industry, I do not see how you can refuse the same protection to the linseed manufacturers. There is another factory in the North, which is languishing. They will now say it is for want of Government assistance; but it is simply shut up from other causes—the want of proper machinery. In the South we have two sorts of machinery, and with one sort we find that the industry is successful, and we can produce a fibre for export worth £70 per ton. This is an industry which will produce for export an article for which there is an inexhaustible demand in other parts of the world. This beet industry, on the other hand, is not intended to produce an exportable article. Now I come to a section of the debate

Mr. Wakefield

which has occupied the greater part of the evening, and which has been very interesting. Statements have been made by a number of honourable gentlemen—particularly the Colonial Treasurer, and the honourable members for Bruce and Franklin North - who have brought a vast amount of information before antly in New Zealand; that it costs hardly anything to cultivate, and that its products are simply enormous. The honourable member for Bruce has told us that a man has only to grow beet-root on ten acres of ground in order to have £100 at the end of the year to put in the bank. He goes on in a proportionate scale: If a man grows 100 acres of beet-root, he will have £1,000 to put in the bank; and so, I suppose, if he grows 1,000 acres he will have £10,000 of profit, if 10,000 acres then £100,000, and if 100,000 acres then a million sterling to put in the bank. So that, at that rate, there is nothing to prevent us paying off our national debt in a few years. The honourable member for Franklin North has given us similar experience, only in a little more sober account, if I may so speak. He told us you can get a gross receipt of £30 an acre from sorghum; he did not tell us what the expenses would be, but he led us to believe they would be very small, and the Treasurer told us so too. Now, as has been already pointed out, nearly all the information that has been given by the Treasurer is to be found in Mr. Graham's pamphlet; the honour-able gentleman's speech contained passages taken almost verbatim from that pamphlet. All that he told us, and a great deal more, is to be found in this pamphlet, which contains extracts from M. De Lavergne's work, "L'Eco-nomie rurale de la France." Mr. Graham shows that twenty tons per acre will produce a net profit of £9 4s. He gives particulars of the expense that will be incurred, the cost of labour, cultivating the soil, drilling, manuring, and so on, and he makes the amount 27. He shows that on bad land the net profit will be £3 an acre, that on middling land it will be £5 10s., and that on good land it will be £94s. per acre. Those statements are somewhat startling. Then, he goes on to tell us that, "In the interest of every New Zealand settler it is necessary to give a bonus, and 'protect' the industry in a variety of ways." Sir, a more illogical conclusion I should have thought it would be quite impossible to imagine. The pamphlet proves conclusively that the industry requires no State encouragement, but that it is a fortune to any man who will enter upon it. I have no doubt that the Colonial Treasurer took his Bill from this pamphlet of Mr. Graham, as all its recom-mendations are contained in this publication. The same non sequitur occurs in this pamphlet that occurs in the speech of the honourable member for Bruce, who dilated tonight on the enormous advantages of beet-root-growing. If a man has only to farm ten acres of land in order to make a net profit of £100 by the end of the year to put in the savings-bank, I say by all means let him

do it; let every man immediately go and cultivate ten acres of land, and put £100 into the bank at the end of the year. But, I say, let him do it out of his ten acres and not out of the pockets of the taxpayers of New Zealand. Looking at the matter in a New Zeatand. Looking at the inster in a reasonable way, can the arguments of the honourable gentleman be said to hang together with the other statement that a protective duty of a halfpenny in the pound is required in order to bring this industry into New Zealand? The statements are contradic-I believe that New Zealand is very well suited for the beet-root industry—that places in New Zealand which the Colonial Treasurer never mentioned are well suited. I believe that beet-root can be grown inland away from the sea-away from salt streams. It will not grow well near the sea, for the reason that a small quantity of salt will destroy a large quantity of sugar. That is found to be the case. But in places inland, protected from these saline influences, beet-root will grow very well in New Zealand where there is moisture sufficient to keep it growing. I have no doubt that good sugar will be extracted from it. If honourable gentlemen will look at the report I prepared on the Ashburton Exhibition in 1881, they will find information on the sub-ject of growing beet-root. They will see that about Ashburton the beet-root yields 15 per cent. of sugar, whereas in Germany 12 per cent. is considered a satisfactory return. We do not want any statements to show us that we can grow beet-root and make sugar from it; but the point is, whether it is not cheaper to get the sugar from abroad than grow it in the country — whether it is not better to buy sugar in the cheapest markets than produce it by an expensive process in the colony. Honourable gentlemen have said that half a million of money a year is sent out of New Zealand for sugar, which might be kept in the colony. That is a sheer fallacy. If you can get sugar cheaper from abroad than you can by growing it in the country, then it is cheaper to send half a million of money out of the country. It is a question of exchange, and the principle of exchange is the very essence of the prosperity of a commercial country. To say that we are not to send any money out of New Zealand is to say that we are not to send any produce out of New Zealand, that we should grow everything for our own use, and never send anything away. Suppose any man in business were to conduct his affairs on that principle, what would be the result? He would be able to live for a time, but he would never be any richer, and he would end by starving to death. I have never been able to see what harm it can be to a country to send products abroad, and bring back in exchange for them other products which could not be grown as cheaply as they could be imported. That, to my mind, is the essence of business. We have splendid exports from New Zealand. There are very few countries in the world—as has been shown over and over again by the Colonial Treasurer himself-no country where the exports have increased in number and value as in New Zealand during the comparatively short period it has been colonized. There is no more ardent advocate of local industries in New Zealand than I am, and very few men have given more attention to the subject than I have, and, because I am opposing this Bill, it must not be supposed that I am opposed in any way to local industries; but I say we are going alto-gether on a wrong course—one that will tamper with our fiscal system, throw our fiscal policy into confusion, and also damage our exchange trade with other countries of the world. And what for? Simply for the sake of assisting particular persons to set about trying com-mercial experiments which they could well afford to try without the assistance now proposed. We are told that we should pass this Bill on account of the great benefits it will con-fer upon the North Island—that we should do so, if we wish to have the capital spent in the colony, and to fill the country with a thriving population. The fact is, we cannot afford to give £4,000 to people to start sugar-making. Why cannot they raise the money themselves? In Queen Street, Auckland, they could collect the £4,000 in half an hour, if it were shown to the satisfaction of business men that these vast results would accrue. Surely they are not driven to such terrible straits that they could not collect £4,000 in New Zealand in order to start this trade. I know it would cost more than £4,000 to start a factory. Mr. Graham estimates, in his pamphlet, that it would cost £10,000 to start a factory that would produce 1,200,000lb. of raw sugar per annum. All the information is contained in this pamphlet. I do not wish to quote the particulars fully, as no doubt honourable members have read the pamphlet. Could not the commercial people of New Zealand provide the money themselves, if the results will be such as are here stated from the establishment of such an industry, and not ask for State assistance? We have already various industries in different parts of New Zealand started and carried on without such aid. Take, for instance, our breweries: there is a great amount of money invested in them. Take our factories the boot-factory in Christchurch, for instancethere is a great amount of money invested in that trade, and in other undertakings. The people have put their money into these various branches of industry. Is there any good reason why we should be called upon to make special offorts to assist the sugar industry? I say, if the granting of a small bonus alone, without subsequent protection, would do it, by all means give it to them. I do not, however, believe that it will. The fact brought forward by the honourable member for Thorndon was most important: that the value of sugar as a marketable commodity fluctuates so enormously that you never can tell whether State aid will make any difference or not in a matter of this kind. He has shown us that during the last few months the value of sugar has decreased to an unprecedented extent. The same thing may happen to-morrow. The

Mr. Wakefield

Beet-Root

direct steam service might upset the calculations upon which this Bill is framed. It is a wrong course to adopt to try to set up an industry by means of a protective duty, or something equivalent to a protective duty. I know it may be said that this is not really a question of protective duty, for the reason that it is not proposed to raise the sugar duty at the present time. But the moment you say that the duty shall be fixed, and that this Parliament shall have no power to alter it unless it compensates the people engaged in this industry, you make it a question of protective duty. The 4th clause of the Bill shows that, if we were to abolish or reduce the import duty, we should have to go on paying these people afterwards. I contend that we are decidedly passing a measure of Protection, in adopting this Bill. I shall oppose it, not only on the ground that we do not want a Bill to encourage this industry, but because I am opposed to Protection in any shape or form.

Mr. JOYCE.—The honourable member for Selwyn just now mentioned three or four industries as illustrative of his position that it is possible to start industries in this colony without adopting a system of protective duties.

without adopting a system of protective duties.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I said without giving bonuses.

Mr. JOYCE.—And without protective duties.
Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I did not say that.
Mr. JOYCE.—Well, I will assume that the
honourable member simply referred to bonuses;
but I understood him to include protective

but I understood him to include protective duties as well, and I rose because his remarks suggested to me this thought: that, if you take away from those industries the protective duties that are now levied in their favour, they will at once perish. Take away the duties which operate in favour of the woollen industry, the boot industry, the clothing factories, and you will find that they will at once perish, every one of them. Honourable gentlemen call themselves Free-traders, and would have us believe that these duties are not protective, but are levied for revenue purposes. But that is a mere delusion. They are to all intents and purposes protective duties; and, if the protection afforded by those duties were once withdrawn, then these industries would perish. I do not intend to say anything or take up the time of the House. I had some idea, however, earlier in the evening, of speaking at some length on the subject. I am an ardent Protectionist, and I had a desire to reply to the honourable member for Inangahua, who certainly placed before the House in a beautifully concise form the views of what I might term the ultra Free-traders. And, from the honourable gentleman's point of view, no doubt he made out a good case; but the inexorable logic of facts is dead against these refined arguments. The arguments may be right enough in an abstract form, but we have before us the fact that the greatest nations in the world-America, France, Prussia, and other countries -have all practised Protection, and surely we will not set ourselves up to say that we are right and that they are wrong. There was

one other thing that I desired to say, and that | was with regard to the remark of the honourable member for Wakanui, who spoke of the impossibility of our competing against countries in which the price of labour was low. But if the honourable gentleman will think for a moment, he will see that his argument carries no weight whatever. We, in this country, notwithstanding our high-priced labour, grow wheat and export it to the Home-country and compete successfully in Britain with the wheat grown there, where there is low-priced As is suggested by an honourable gentleman sitting near me, we compete even with India. I am afraid, however, that we shall not long grow wheat for export. No one can close his eyes to that fact, and we should cast about for fresh industries. It is now seven years since this question was last under discussion in this House, and I certainly regret very much that the House did not then come to the conclusion that we are now asked to come to; I regret that we did not then try the experiment of giving assistance to the sugar industry. Possibly had we done so we should not have seen the depression which we have seen existing during the past two or three years. It was, I think, worth while sacrificing a little in order to establish an industry of such importance. I will add this: Something has been said about so much money being thrown away each year—some £4,000 or £5,000 -by way of bonus to this industry; but will it be believed that during the last twelve months we have paid away double that amount for the encouragement of the saw-milling indus-try in Western Australia? We have during the last twelve months imported one hundred thousand sleepers, at a cost of 5s. per sleeper or thereabouts; while, at the same time, we could have got an equally good article in this country for about half the money. No one mised his voice against that protection of a foreign industry. With regard to the proposal contained in this Bill, we should not have the slightest hesitation in paying away so much to establish this sugar-producing industry. France at this moment pays, and has for many years past paid, a bounty of about a halfpenny a pound on every pound of sugar exported to Great Britain, and finds it to her advantage to do so, despite all the reasonings of the Free-traders. The French people look at the facts; they see that all their people are employed; that they have no poor people; that there is employment for every one willing to work; and they say it is worth while making a merifice for that purpose. Must we not agree with them? It is said that this must always be a garden industry—that we must always contend with the disadvantage of dear labour; but I do not think so. We have such complete appliances for cultivating the land now that the difficulty with regard to labour may be said to have been overcome. I hope that it may become a successful industry, and there-

fore I shall support the Bill.

Mr. W. WHITE.—I understood the honourable member for Selwyn to say that he wished to see the sugar industry brought into existence in the same manner as that in which other industries were brought into existence - by means of bonuses.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—No. Mr. W. WHITE.—If so, I do not see how he can call himself a Free-trader, because bonuses are to some extent protective. Then, he went on to say that he would encourage local in-dustries; but in what way he would do it, except by Protection, I fail to see. As far as this particular industry is concerned, I shall be prepared to give it some support, though I cannot go to the extent proposed in this Bill. I think it unfair and improper to put on such a. duty as is here proposed for fifteen years, for, after all, it is a duty, whether you pay it in the shape of an import duty or pay out of the consolidated revenue. I would much prefer, as other honourable members have suggested, to see the bonus increased at once, and these provisions relating to Excise done away with, for then we should know exactly what our liabilities really are. I think the duty should be taken off sugar altogether. I cannot agree with the honourable member for Selwyn that all that is proposed to be done could be done by bonuses, and that the Bill is therefore unnecessary. You could not, without an Act, secure what is contemplated in clause 3—the prevention of the imposition of an Excise duty on sugar. However, I think, from the terms in which this industry has been spoken of, that it should prosper very well even without this Bill. We know that there are now in the colony gentlemen with capital looking about to start industries without any protection, and we have only to look back over the last two years to see what large undertakings may be started without such aid. Two years ago we were asked for a bonus of some £40,000 a year on behalf of the New Zealand Shipping Company to encourage it to start a direct steam service, and we were told that we could not for many years have a steam service unless we paid some such sum; but now we have two direct steam lines, without having incurred any expenditure of the kind. I shall vote for the second reading of this Bill, but reserve to myself the right to vote, in Committee, for striking out the 4th clause, and, like the honourable member for Akaroa, if this clause should not be struck out, I shall vote against the third reading of the Bill.

Mr. SMITH .-- I will point out to the honourable member for Awarua that one circumstance escaped him when he said that, as we had sent wheat Home to England and had competed with wheat grown there by the aid of cheap labour, therefore dear labour was not likely to interfere with the progress of this sugar-growing industry. Why is it that we are able to send wheat Home to England? Is it not because England is a Free-trade country and does not put any duty on wheat? If England were to put a duty on wheat, we should not be able to send Home another bushel. This fallacy lies at the root of all the arguments of the Protectionists. If the country adopts a protective policy, and can send its exports to a Free-trade

country, where they are admitted free of duty, and puts a protective tax upon the goods which come from that country, of course Protection may prove a very good policy. But, if all countries adopt a protective policy, what advantage is Protection then to any particular country? I, as a Free-trader, object to clause 4 in the Bill, because it prevents the duty being taken off sugar during the next fifteen years. No doubt this industry would be a very good one for the colony if it could be established, and I am quite aware that a large proportion of the Hawke's Bay District is specially suitable for the growth of beet and sorghum; but nevertheless I object to the 4th clause. I am not in favour of Protection, and I cannot see its advantages. The arguments sound very well, but they do not work out in practice. One great argument is that Protection increases the price of labour, and gives more employment; but what really happens in experience is this: Suppose a particular trade is protected—the shoemaking trade, for instance—the men employed in that trade get more for their labour perhaps, but then they have to pay much more for the boots which they and their families use, and the extra price which they pay goes far to reduce the amount of wages which they receive; and, if Protection is applied to all other articles of use, the advantage of high wages soon disappears, because the labourer has to pay so much more for clothing and for every-thing else he wants. It is found in all Protection countries, like America, that once you adopt a policy of Protection it cannot be got rid of. If one trade enjoys the benefit of Protection other trades want it, and gradually it is extended to all, and the trades become so powerful, as they have done in Victoria, that it is quite impossible to do away with Protection. I shall not oppose the Bill at this stage. The only objection I have is to the 4th clause, and I object to that because I do not think it would be of advantage to have protective duties to the extent contemplated by that clause.

Beet-Root

Mr. HATCH.—The honourable member for Selwyn made one great mistake. In speaking of the linseed-oil industry, he said he had a considerable interest in a company in Canterbury, and that that company had not wanted any protection, but yet had started the industry very successfully, and he hoped it would pay. Now, I wish to point out that that par-ticular industry had been protected from the very beginning. It is protected, in the first instance, by a duty of 6d. per gallon on the oil; and then, if any person wishes to import lin-seed, from India or any other place where it is grown, for the purpose of making oil, it is insisted that the linseed shall pay duty as grain, but if it is imported merely as linseed for medicinal or seed purposes there is no duty on it.

Mr. WAKEFIELD. - We make no oil, so

that we are not protected in any way.

Mr. HATCH.—Then the company cannot prosper. What does it manufacture?

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—Fibre—binding-twine and fibre for export. We do not manufacture oil, nor have we any intention of doing so.

Mr. Smith

Mr. HATCH.—The company would find much more profitable to manufacture of However, I did not intend to speak upon the subject. I will only say that I believe in Pr tection myself, and, as to bonuses, I will simpl say that, as the system of bonuses was starte two years ago, and has not been taken advatage of to any extent, that shows that the system has been a failure and open to grav objection, I think. If we are going to state any industries at all, it is necessary to do a through the Customs; and there I think the Bill is a little premature, because it is only part of a system of alterations in the Custon duties, which the Government have not ha time to go into. I certainly believe we hav not population to go into this matter properly Then, the payment of a bonus for erecting plan is not sufficient. It is absolutely necessary ! hold out considerable inducements to thos who are to grow the material for the plant ! work upon.

Mr. STOUT.—I am glad to see that a round the House there seems to be a desire t do something to promote further agriculture products in this colony; and the only question is, How can it be done, if it can be done by the Government at all? The honourable member who quoted from Professor Sumne seemed to support the principle that the Gevernment ought not to interfere in any indus tries at all. If that principle were properly carried out, we should not have the Govern ment constructing roads, bridges, railways, o harbour works. The honourable member to Taranaki, whose speeches are always a pal reflex of a Cobden Club essay, talked, as usual about the Free-trade system in England a a thing that we ought to follow. understand that honourable gentleman's posi tion. If he is logical, he must take up the same position as Sumner and all those politica philosophers who say that the State should interfere with nothing, but simply keep order But, if the State is to foster agricultural indus tries and commerce by subsidizing the making of roads, bridges, railways, and steam services where is the line to be drawn? It is to be drawn at what is expedient for the time being.

Colonel TRIMBLE.—I draw no line at all. Mr. STOUT.—Of course not. We find him always voting on his own side in favour of State aid to roads, bridges, harbours, and so forth There is no consistency in the honourable gentleman's action, if he is really a believer in the laisses faire policy. Without following the arguments of all the speakers, I would refer to one or two points. I heard a reference to Freetrade colonies, and the great advantages they enjoyed; and I actually heard to-night that New South Wales is a Free-trade colony. Why, take this very question of the sugar duty. New South Wales puts a duty of 2d. on refined sugar, and about 1d. on raw sugar. On a great many things, even articles of food, New South Wales has heavier duties than New Zealand; so it is nonsense to talk about New South Wales being a Free-trade colony. Then, we had an instance given of the Straits Settlement.

Why, it is only about the size of one of the New Zealand counties—about half as big again as Stewart Island—and that is to be taken as a test.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—What about the population ?

Mr. STOUT.—It is true the population is about half a million; but it is composed of Malays and Chinamen. And how are they taxed? Taxes are put on opium and on spirits; and—would honourable members believe it? -this most prosperous colony depends on a land-tax, which the honourable member for Selwyn always opposes, and declares would be the ruin of New Zealand. Then, the honourable member for Selwyn proceeded to flatter the honourable member for Thorndon about the free breakfast-table that he mentioned. Why, the honourable member for Selwyn was one of those who sneered most at the remission of the sugar duty in 1878, and declared that it was not the working-man but the squatter

who would gain by it.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—That was quite true.

Mr. STOUT.—Then, what was the meaning of the reference to the speech of the honourable member for Thorndon?

Mr. WAKEFIELD. — I made no reference whatever to what he said about a free breakfast-table. I referred to his allusion to the fall in the price of sugar owing to the opening of the China trade.

Mr. STOUT.—Did not the honourable member, in his speech, refer to the possible remission or taking-off of the sugar duty altogether?

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—No.

Mr. STOUT.—Very well; in that case the honourable member can have no objection whatever to the proposal in this Bill to keep the duty at id., because the remission would not benefit the working-man but the large squatters, and he does not wish to benefit them - he wishes to see the working-classes benefited. Therefore he cannot reasonably object to the main clauses of the Bill. he talked about being the father of the bonus system. I really think he should remember the old maxim which says one should not give himself self-praise. It is nonsense for him to talk about being the father of the bonus system. There were bonuses given long before his Commission reported. Of course, I assume from the tone of his speech that all the other members of that Commission— Messrs. Tinné, Bain, Stevens, Burns, and W. A. Murray—were mere dummies; that the whole eport was written by the honourable member for Selwyn. What was the system there recommended? Will honourable members really believe that the system there advocated was not the system of bonus recommended in this Bill, but the system which the honourable member most strongly denounced in the South Sea Island Bill? It was proposed to pay an interest of 5 per cent. upon capital invested in all industries except silk. There were to be subsidized trading companies throughout the length and breadth of New

Zealand. That honourable member who was so eloquent in denouncing the South Sea. Island Bill actually recommended a system of bonus which was founded entirely upon a guarantee system, throughout the length and breadth of the colony, for all kinds of industries!

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—Nothing of the sort.

Mr. STOUT .- The report says,-

"The Commission therefore desire that the expression 'bonus' whenever used in their re-port, except with respect to the production of silk, shall be understood to mean a guarantee of interest on the capital invested up to 5 per cent., for a period of four to six years."

The honourable member has forgotten what.

he wrote.

[HOUSE.]

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I had it before me.

Mr. STOUT .- Then, why interrupt me and say it was not a guaranteed interest on capi-

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—For a limited period.

Mr. STOUT.—There was not a word about "limited period." He interrupted by saying it was not a guarantee of interest on capital. Really the honourable member should think that, when I refer to a document, my memory is sufficient to recollect what is in it.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—What is all this about? Why are you assailing me now?

Mr. STOUT.—Simply to prove, if it is necessary, that, on this question as on many others, the honourable member speaks one way in the first part of his speech, in another way at the end of it, and then forgets all about what he The honourable member's opinion on said. this question of bonuses may have been valuable for the honourable member for Thorndon, and those members of the Commission who were dummies, and who merely signed the report; but it can have no value whatever, in discussing this question, for honourable members who wish to be guided by some definite principle. I hope the honourable member will pardon me, but throughout the session he seems to get up to speak simply to attack the Colonial Treasurer on every measure brought. down. I do not say that he has any personal feeling in the matter, because I put it in this way: He is never, to use a common phrase, "in good form" except when he is criticising. He is utterly at sea if he has to support a Bill. We always see that, whenever the honourable gentleman is criticising a Bill, he is in his happiest vein, especially when he has no past history on the subject. Whenever he has spoken on the subject before, he evidently feels that he is shackled and hampered by his past history. Now, I feel sure that the honourable member would have to-night made a far more brilliant speech if it had not been for this unfortunate 5 - percent. guarantee of interest. I shall say no more about that. I wish to say another word about the beet-root-sugar production. It seems. to me that many honourable members who have spoken upon it have not read much on the subject. I do not pretend myself to have any practical knowledge of it, and the only

acquaintance I have with it is from what I have read with regard to it during the last few years. From that I learn that the beet-rootsugar industry has, in France, in Germany, in Russia, and in Austria, become one of the largest industries in those countries. No doubt that was first brought about by Government interference—first of all, by the Great Napoleon, in France; but it was not started in Germany till 1835. In these countries it has been, to small farmers and to persons with small estates, a great assistance, because, dur-ing the part of the year which is suited to agricultural pursuits, they attend to them, and then, during the remaining portion, they devote themselves to the beet-root-sugar fac-If we had this industry established here, we should have men working as farmlabourers, as harvesters, and even as shearers, during the summer months; and then, in winter, they could apply themselves to the sugar factories, instead of crowding into the towns, as they do now, doing nothing; because, as was proved before the Committee which inquired into the question—the beet-root will keep for several months without deteriorating or becoming unfit for the purpose of sugar-production. That is the plan pursued in these Continental countries, and it is found to work to great advantage. I do not believe that the carrying a Beet-root Sugar Bill, or the starting of any particular industry, is going to make this colony great and rich; but what I say is that Parliament should encourage the starting of all the smaller industries, and that we should not trust to one or two staples. The effect of doing that is that, when a pressure comes and affects those staples, it is felt throughout the country, and we then have numbers of unemployed calling upon us for assistance. The country which has the greatest diversity of industries is the one that can stand any unforeseen depression the best. think that the Government should encourage all kinds of industries, and we have fixed upon this beet-root sugar simply because we knew that wheat and oats have fallen to a very low price, and that agriculturists, and especially small farmers, must look to something else to make a living. If, by giving this bonus and by keeping the duty at 1d. for a few years, we encourage small farmers to take up this in-dustry, I believe we shall be doing something which will not only help them, but which will serve the best interests of the colony.

Bill read a second time.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes to two o'clock a.m.

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, 30th October, 1884.

First Readings—Third Readings—East and West Coast (Middle Island) and Nelson Railway and Railways Construction Bill—Police Offences Bill—Drainage of Mines Bill—Breach of Trusts Bill—Wanganui Harbour Board Empowering Bill—Printers and Newspapers Registration Bill—

Mr. Stout

Trustees' and Executors' Shareholders Liability

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READINGS.

Land Bill, Life Insurance Policies Bill, West Coast Settlement Reserves Bill, Electric Lines

THIRD READINGS.

Greymouth Harbour Board Bill, Westport Harbour Board Bill, Destitute Persons Bill, Workmen's Wages Bill.

EAST AND WEST COAST (MIDDLE ISLAND) AND NELSON RAILWAY AND RAILWAYS CONSTRUCTION BILL.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN, in moving the motion standing in his name, said he had put it on the Paper because he had failed to elicit the information when the Bill was going through. The Hon. the Colonial Secretary was kind enough to say he would procure all the information available, and therefore he pre-sumed there would be no objection to the motion. As to the excuse that the information was not easily procurable, he might say that certain information had been sent outside to other people from the offices, and he thought it a proper thing that all information connected with the land that might be affected by the Bill should be placed before the Council in an official manner. It was with the view of getting the information that he made this motion. No doubt the inducements offered to make the line were great, and, from information he had, he believed the syndicate was satisfied, and more than satisfied, with the Bill; and the only difficulty would be as to how long what was to be got from the concessions would carry on the working of the railway after it was made, which for some time must be a losing concern.

Motion made, and question proposed, "That there be laid on the table a return of land available for concession under clauses 7 and 8 of the East and West Coast (Middle Island) and Nelson Railway and Railways Construction Bill, together with a map showing the position of the land."—(Hon. Mr. McLean.)

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY said he was getting the information for the honourable member, and as soon as he had got it he would lay it on the table.

Motion agreed to.

#### POLICE OFFENCES BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 16.—Penalty for trading, &c., on Sun-

day.
The Hon. Mr. OLIVER moved, That the

The Committee divided on the question, "That the clause be retained."

AYES, 21.

Acland Barnicoat Brett Campbell Buckley, G. Dignan Buckley, P. A. Hart

Lahmann

Handerson Peter Richmond, J.C. | Pollen Kohere Waterhouse Miller Reeves Wigley Reynolds Wilson. Peacock Nors, 8. Brandon McLean Scotland Williamson. Fraser Nurse

Oliver Majority for, 13.

Clause retained. Bill reported.

#### DRAINAGE OF MINES BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN moved, That progress be reported.

The Committee divided.

AYES, 11. Miller Bonar Richmond, J. C. Brandon Nurse Waterhouse Chamberlin Peter Williamson. McLean Pollen Noes, 10. Barnicoat Fraser Reeves Reynolds

Buckley, G. Lahmann Buckley, P. A. Peacock Wilson. Campbell

Majority for, 1. Progress reported.

BREACH OF TRUSTS BILL.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said that at this advanced period of the session he did not think the Bill had the slightest chance of being passed into law; but he thought it well to bring it forward, in order to ventilate the subject. He should therefore move the second reading pro formâ, and, if that stage were passed, he should not press the Bill further. Within the last lew years there had grown up among local bodies a reprehensible habit with regard to the appropriation of borrowed money and the issuing of debentures. In the Municipal Corporations Act and the Counties Act there were stringent provisions concerning the issuing of debentures. If a County or Municipal Council issued debentures in excess of the amount legally authorized, the members were jointly and severally liable for the amount in excess. At the same time, if one of these bodies overdrew its account at the bank beyond the amount authorized by law, the members of the Council were individually and collectively responsible. But these two important safe-guards, which had been introduced into these two measures, had not, as far as he was aware, been introduced into measures affecting other local bodies. The Legislature had given a large number of other local bodies the power of borrowing on debentures, but had in no case provided that any one should be held responsible if debentures for an amount exceeding that authorized were issued. It was usual, also, in authorizing loans by local bodies, to specify that the funds should be devoted to certain works which were named in the Bill

giving the power: but there were no penal consequences if, instead of the funds being spent on those works, they were diverted to some other purpose. This had been an important omission in their legislation, and the omission was now coming to the knowledge of many local bodies. It was within his own knowledge that in some cases it had been stated among members of local bodies that, as no penal result could flow from a non-observance of the provisions made by the Legislature in regard to the appropriation of moneys, those provisions need not be strictly observed. As showing the large number of local bodies that were authorized by the Legislature to issue debentures in order to raise money for specific works, he had only to refer to the number of Bills brought forward during this session. There were the River Boards Bill, and the Otago, Wellington, Napier, Gis-borne, Wanganui, Westport, and Greymouth Harbour Bills, in each of which extensive powers were given to raise money for specific works by the issue of debentures. But, though the maximum amounts to be raised and the works on which the money was to be spent were distinctly specified, yet in none of those measures was there inserted the provision contained in the Municipal Corporations and Counties Acts, making the members of the Boards individually and collectively responsible for the strict observance of the powers placed in their hands. Now, he thought it would be obvious to honourable members that some change in the law, to bring home to members of these Boards a sense of the responsibility placed upon them, and to cause them to feel a lively interest in the observance of the conditions upon which money had been placed in their hands, was desirable. He would not go so far as to say that the mode he indicated was in all respects the best mode of enforcing a due observance of those conditions; but, as the mat-ter could not be definitely dealt with this session, and as he should be content with hav-ing it ventilated at the present moment, he would only venture to indulge in a hope that the subject would, during the recess, be taken up by the Government, and that a measure of this character would be brought forward on the responsibility of the Government, dealing with the subject in the manner they considered most effective. He would therefore now only ask the Council to formally agree to the second reading of this Bill, merely to affirm the principle that it was desirable there should be some

legislation in this direction. Bill read a second time.

#### WANGANUI HARBOUR BOARD EM-POWERING BILL.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said it was brought forward under the circumstances stated in the preamble. Some years ago a Harbour Board was constituted, and certain powers were given to it for improving the Port of Wanganui. The Board was authorized, under an Act of 1877, to borrow to an amount not exceeding £100,000; but the Board, not then being fully aware of their position, did not seek to obtain power to A sum of £60,000 had raise a harbour rate. been raised and applied to the purposes of the trust; the works had progressed to a certain point, and, as he was informed, had met with a considerable amount of success, the depth of water having been increased and greater fa-cilities given to shipping in every way. But the works were still unfinished, and it was important that facilities should be given for their completion without delay, for, as honourable members must know, unfinished harbour works exposed to the action of the sea were liable to considerable danger; there was no safety until they were completed. Now, for the purpose of raising £40,000—the balance of the £100,000 — it was considered necessary that power should be taken to raise a rate, and to give that power was the sole object of the Bill. The Local Bills Committee had recommended that the Bill should be proceeded with, subject to a series of amendments which they had attached to their report. He would not dwell upon those amendments now, because he should be prepared to accept the bulk of them, and in Committee he should be prepared to discuss any other amendments that might be suggested by honourable members. He was not aware that there would be any opposition to the Bill, and he now moved its second read-

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE said the Council was indebted to Local Bills Committee B for the great amount of attention the Committee had given to this Bill. At the same time he thought the Committee had been somewhat inconsequential in its recommendation with regard to the Bill. The Committee drew "attention to the fact that the district is not constituted as, in their opinion, it ought to have been. The evidence taken conclusively shows that a considerable portion of the district not included in the area liable to be rated will be directly benefited by the improvement of the harbour, and the Committee are therefore of opinion that provision should have been made for the inclusion in the rateable area of every part of the district to be benefited." But, though they stated that this important alteration ought to be made, they had not included an amendment to effect it among the amendments they had suggested. Now, he knew nothing in regard to this Bill beyond what was probably known to other honourable members; but its proposal was one that had undoubtedly been freely discussed in the locality affected, and was the subject of a good deal of difference of opinion among those concerned. The Bill did not come to them indorsed with the assent of the Harbour Board as a whole; but he believed he was correct in saying that the proposition to promote the Bill had only been passed by the Board, after considerable discussion, by a majority of one. And the peculiar constitution of the rating district was calculated to suggest the idea that it had been so constituted in order to insure a work unpopular in the country parts of the district being carried out in spite of the

opposition of the country, and that the district was so constituted that the ratepayers in the Town of Wanganui-who had a special interest in the scheme-might swamp the country ratepayers who were opposed to it. It seemed that the district to be rated had been purposely restricted in its extent to insure this end—that the ratepayers in the Town of Wanganui should have a prepon-derating influence. Now, he thought this was a subject which the Council, as the matter had come under their notice, should see was in some way provided for, and that they ought not to allow the district to be thus constituted for a purpose that was really not defensible. Therefore, although the Local Bills Committee had made no particular recommendation on this subject, having contented themselves with calling attention to the fact, he should in Committee take upon himself to act upon their suggestion, and propose an amendment providing that the Governor in Council should constitute the district, and that the district should include the whole of the part of the country likely to be benefited by the works to be undertaken. That was the sole proposal -outside the recommendations of the Local Bills Committee—that he should feel it his duty to make when the Bill was in Committee of the Whole.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER said it was quite true that this Bill was made the subject of a good deal of attention by the Local Bills Committee B, and it was well known to the Hon. the Speaker and to the Council that the Committee really found themselves on the horns of a dilemma. They were in this position: Having come to the conclusion that there was a portion of the district—namely, a portion of the County of Rangitikei-not included in the rateable area under the Bill, but which would be benefited directly by the improvement of the harbour, they felt it was their duty to report that fact to the Council. There could be no doubt whatever of the fact. The member for Rangitikei himself at once most fairly and candidly admitted, without any hesita-tion, that a portion of the Rangitikei County would be directly benefited by the improve-ment of the harbour. But there then came the question, Was it a right thing for the Council to do, or would it be a right thing for the Committee to recommend, that the Bill should be so amended that people in that por-tion of the Rangitikei County which would be benefited by the improvement of the harbour should be made subject to the rate, without any notice having been given them that they were to be so made liable? The Hon, the Speaker had been most distinctly of opinion that it would be a very bad precedent to take that course; and, although undoubtedly the Council had power to do such a thing, it was a power which should be exercised very rarcly indeed. That was the view of the Committee, and therefore he did not think that the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse was quite justified in saying that the conclusion at which the Committee had arrived was inconsequential. The

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Committee had thought it better to allow the Bill to proceed, even though that defect existed in it, than to take upon themselves to stop the harbour works, which he had reason to believe would, if properly carried out, be a great benefit to the whole district. work was already in progress. It would be remembered that it was not a new work. Had it been altogether a new work, of course the circumstances would have been entirely different. Looking at the fact that the work was in progress, and that no notice whatever had been given to the people of Rangitikei as to includ-ing them in the rating district, he thought the Committee had come to a right conclusion. It must be understood that the borough had not a preponderating influence, because the consti-tation of the Board was this: There were six members representing the counties and five representing the borough, and two other members were nominated by the Government: that was, thirteen in all. Nor was it quite correct to say that the number of votes exercisable in the borough was greater than the number ex-excisable in the counties. The borough, if he remembered rightly, had one thousand two hundred odd votes, and the courses about one thousand three hundred votes; and, if a portion of the County of Rangitikei were included, the preponderance of county votes must be still larger. He did not think the borough ratepayers would be actuated altogether by a desire to have the proposed expenditure merely for its own sake. That was an argument which might be used, but he did not think it was a very fair one. He, for one, had no hesitation in saying that he thought a part of the Rangitikei County ought to be included in the rating district; and of course, if that were done, it would very much reduce the proportionate burden on the whole district. He had merely risen, however, to say that he did not think the Committee could have reported in any other way, especially looking at the ruling the Hon. the Speaker had given. He (Mr. Miller) thought that ruling was perfectly in accordance with precedents, and that it was right and just.

The Hon. Mr. OLIVER said there was no doubt the exclusion of a certain district, which would be as much benefited by the improvement of the harbour as would any part of the area included in the district, would increase the burdens of the district as constituted. That did not seem very honest or fair. He thought the only fair and just course would be drop the measure for the session, and then, before the next session, the people of that part of the Rangitikei District which would be benefited by the improvement of the harbour would be given ample opportunity of receiving notice and expressing their views as to their inclusion in the proposed rating district.

The Hon. Dr. GRACE thought it would be very generally admitted that Rangitikei ought to be included in the rating district, and, as that county had evidently been intentionally excluded from the district as proposed to be constituted, he thought the Council should do justice in the matter, and refuse to pass this

It was perfectly evident that the reareason why Rangitikei was left out was that, the County of Rangitikei being an old-fashioned and economical county, in which the county business was remarkably well managed and the rates carefully administered, the promoters of the Bill feared lest the people of that county would look too carefully after the expenditure of this money, for which they would be made partly responsible. Now, where there was unfairness in drafting a Bill of this kind, the Local Bills Committee might feel itself on the horns of a dilemma; but the Council ought not to be placed on the horns of a dilemma. The Council had a right to see that justice was done to the district in this matter, and, in his opinion, the Council should reject the measure on account of the unfairness of the rating area. Were that deficiency accidental, he himself might support the Bill, but it was clearly an intentional omission on the part of the promoters of the Bill, and he did not think that that was an action which should be indorsed by the Council. To show that clearly, it was only necessary to point out that a considerable part of the Rangitikei County was situated as close to the mouth of the river as any part of the district established under this Act; and being the older district, and being interested in the export of grain, it was the very district which should have been consulted, and whose opinion should have been taken. A year or two ago, when grain was supposed to be valuable in England, Rangitikei began to export grain, and a remarkably good sample of grain it was. If there was one thing more than another bad in our legislation it was the permission of anything like a trick in the management of these local measures, and he had no hesitation in saying that it was a deliberate trick to try to force this Bill on the Legislature in the form in which it was presented. He would proceed to the consideration of the matter as it stood, and of what he should conceive to be the influence on the prospects of the harbour if the Bill was rejected. The present departure being made in the harbour works was entirely new. It was a departure which had been forced on the Board by the utter failure of its previous efforts. The Board was always told that, in order to do anything whatever for a bar harbour like this, it was necessary to narrow the entrance of the river so as to increase the scour; but it had seemed very much more convenient and handy to expend the moneys in narrowing the river within, and the consequence was that about £60,000 had been wasted inside the river. In saying "wasted," he gave the opinion he himself had formed after seeing the works a number of times. He did not believe there was one foot greater depth of waterin the river than there had been. He had known Wanganui for twenty years, and he did not believe there had been the least improvement in the harbour through this large expenditure inside the river. It was now proposed to spend the balance of the £100,000, which the Board was authorized to borrow, at the entrance of the river. The Board had

entered into one contract to erect a pier at the mouth of the river. They had funds enough to pay for that contract, and when it was finished no harm would be done to it by allowing it to stand without further works. Therefore the rejection of the Bill for the present session would have no injurious effect on the harbour. The whole of the harbour works there were experimental; but he did not object to that, because to experimentalize was the custom of the hour. He did, however, object to being hurried into this expenditure in an unfair and unreasonable manner, and he did not think the Council would submit to it.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN said it was not the case, as had been stated by the Hon. Mr. Wilson, that if the Bill were laid aside any injury would result to the harbour works, because the works proposed to be done with the money to be raised were works at the heads, the present contract being in shallow water. Local Bills Committee had had evidence from the different members connected with the district, and the member for Rangitikei candidly confessed that a great portion of his dis-trict would benefit as much as the rest by the improvement of the harbour. That gentleman was asked if he would agree to the district being rated, and replied that he could not consent to it without consulting his constituents; but, in reply to another question, he said if the Bill were allowed to stand over for a year he would do his best to convince his constituents that they should go into it. The Committee did not like to recommend that the Bill should not be proceeded with, and they therefore took as great precautions in amending it as were in their power. They put in a clause making it compulsory that a majority of the voting power exercisable should be obtained before anything was undertaken, and they put in the same clauses in respect to voting as were inserted in the Napier and Gisborne Bills for the pro-tection of the ratepayers. No harm could be done by allowing the Bill to stand over for another year, and therefore, if it came to a vote, he should be obliged to give his vote against the Bill being proceeded with. Al-though he was at all times very loth to take any action which might stop works going on for the benefit of any particular district, still he did not think any harm would be done in this case by delaying the Bill for a year. Debate adjourned,

# PRINTERS AND NEWSPAPERS REGIS-

TRATION BILL.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said it was intended to meet a hardship caused by "The Printers and Act 1869" one second Newspapers Registration Act, 1868," one section of which Act read,-

"If any person who prints any paper or book omit to print therein his name and place of abode as required by this Act, or if any person publish or disperse, or assist in publishing or dispersing, whether gratuitously or for money, any paper or book in which the name and place of abode of the printer thereof is not

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printed as aforesaid, every such person sh for every such copy so published or dispersel by him, but not for more than twenty-fire copies in the whole, forfeit a sum of not less than five and not more than twenty pounds."

That was a very large penalty, and the object of this Bill was to reduce the minimum penalty to 25. The Bill also provided that no action for the recovery of damages should be brought except with the consent of the Attorney-General. There could, he thought, be objection to the Bill. A case had occurred recently in which a person had suffered great hardship under the law as it now stood, which could be used as an engine to extort practically a very large sum of money. He did not think there would be any opposition to the Bill, and he therefore moved its second read-

ing.
The Hon. Mr. REEVES was sorry he could be had been expressed not take the same view as had been expresse about this Bill by the honourable gentleman who moved its second reading. But the honourable gentleman had given such an extremely poor explanation of the matter that it had led him (Mr. Reeves) to suppose that he knew nothing about the subject. It appeared to him that this Bill was one of thos instances where some alleged injustice had taken place, which had come to the notice of a gentleman who might be termed "the friend of humanity;" and he at once proceeded to bring down a new law on the subject. He (Mr. Reeves) thought that was a very poor reson for altering the laws of the colony. This law had now been in force for sixteen years, and this was the first case he had ever hear of any alleged complaint against it. In fact he might say, as to the 2nd clause, that the penalty for offences against the law of liber was looked upon by all honest and honourall men in the profession or trade of printing and publishing as a protection and not a hardship. To reduce the penalty meant in fact to cheapen the offence of libel, and that, he thought, were not at all to be desired. Then, the 3rd clause, he believed, contained a most pernicious principle. It was that, before anybody could proceed in any case of libel, he must get the sanc-tion of the Attorney-General. He would read the clause :-

"From and after the passing of this Act is shall not be lawful for any person, without the previous consent of the Attorney-General, to commence, prosecute, enter, or file any action, plaint, bill, or information against any person or persons for any fine which may be incurred or may have been incurred under the previsions of this Act, or of 'The Printers and Newspapers Registration Act, 1868:' Provided also that no part of the penalties incurred in respect of any offence against either of the last-mentioned Acts shall be for the use of any informer."

Well, he ventured to say that the interference of the Attorney-General was not required all in these cases. He believed that the pro posal was taken from an Imperial Act; but

did not at all follow that because it was suitable in England it was suitable here. The printing offices of this colony were nearly always associated with newspaper offices, and, in any case of libel, the interference of the Attorney-General would be manifestly most undesirable. Newspapers were, and always must be, political organs, and Attorneys-General were all human. Let them suppose the case of a newspaper strongly supporting the Government: a question was referred to the Attorney-General for his opinion as to whether an action should be proceeded with against the proprietor of the paper in his capacity as a printer. That would be a most undesirable position; and the same objection would apply to the converse of the case.

.The Hon. Mr. WILSON said the honourable gentleman had evidently misunderstood the clause. The consent of the Attorney-General would not be necessary for an action for libel; it would be only needed in a case for the re-

covery of penalties.

The Hon. Mr. REEVES would again say that the whole of the Bill was perfectly unnecessary. The penalties were looked upon as a protection to the trade, and not as weighing heavily against it. The Bill originated in a case of some alleged private grievance; and it was the only instance, he believed, of even any alleged grievance in the course of about sixteen years. That could not be taken as at all a sufficient cause for altering the law, and he would therefore move, as an amendment, That the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON said no doubt the honourable gentleman who had just spoken was a better authority on this subject than himself, but he wished to explain that the reason why he had not said more in introducing the Bill was that he considered it unnecessary, being such a little measure. But he thought the honourable gentleman had shown that he had not devoted much time to the Bill, for, if he (Mr. Wilson) had understood him rightly, the honourable gentleman had been under the impression that the Bill would prevent any action for libel being brought without the consent of the Attorney-General. This Bill did not touch the law of libel at all. He thought it exceedingly probable, as the honourable gentleman was a better authority than himself, that there had been only one case of hardship under the Act; but he denied that, because there had been only one case of hardship, that was not sufficient cause for amending the law. He put it before the Council in this way: There was an undue punishment for cases which might after all be very trivial matters. This Bill would not affect the law compelling printers to place their names and places of abode to whatever they might publish, nor did it affect the law of libel. It would only prevent malicious or exaggerated prosecutions for what might be very trivial offences. He would call attention to the 3rd clause. Under clause 20 of the Act any member of the Council who bought a book which had not a

proper imprint, and left it anywhere or gave it away, would be liable an excessive and immoderate penalty. This proposed amendment of the law was a small matter, but it was a step in the right direction. He thought the provision as to obtaining the consent of the Attorney-General was a very proper one. He did not like private prosecutions in these matters, and it was desirable that in such cases the assent of a law officer of the Crown, who was supposed to be an impartial person, should be obtained. He would require that the person desiring to bring an action should show good cause for it, and would exercise his discretion accordingly.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN thought that even from the two speeches of the Hon. Mr. Wilson it was shown that there was no hurry whatever for this Bill. It might be allowed to stand over for a short time at all events; and, in order to give time for consideration of the question, he would move the adjournment of the debate.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS could not see the use of an adjournment. It was now near the end of the session, and it was undesirable to waste time in bringing of the Bill for The question should be another discussion. settled at once.

Motion for the adjournment of the debate

negatived.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE said it was true that this Bill did not affect the remedy of any person aggrieved by anonymous publications to bring an action for libel; but what was the use of bringing an action for libel against the generally poor and needy men who were usually employed to distribute these flying-sheets? What was wanted as a remedy in such cases was not an action for libel, but a prompt and short mode of bringing the guilty parties before a Resident Magistrate, and having them punished summarily. To provide that no one should bring an action without the consent of the Attorney-General would mean that those guilty of offences under the Act would be practically left untouched. He thought they should be very careful how they altered the law in this respect, or otherwise they might see anonymous sheets of libellous matter scattered throughout the community, and introducing much trouble and scandal into private families. The Act might be susceptible of a little improvement, but the 3rd clause of this Bill was very objectionable, and he could not vote for the Bill on the chance that it might be rendered unobjectionable in Commit-

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN said he should support the amendment. It was within his recollection that at the time the Act was passed the very evil which the clause now in question was intended to cure was rampant in that part of the colony with which he was best acquainted. Political feeling in that quarter had risen very high, and the scandal caused by anonymous publications was intolerable. He hoped that any protection the law afforded to prevent a recurrence of such a state of things would not

be removed, and he therefore could not support this Bill.

Amendment agreed to:

TRUSTEES' AND EXECUTORS' SHARE-HOLDERS LIABILITY BILL.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON moved, That the committal of this Bill be made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER moved, as an amendment, That the committal of the Bill be made an Order of the Day for that day fortnight. It was useless to pretend to think it would be got through at this period of the session.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE said these Trustee Bills were becoming a sort of legislative nightmare. There was no chance whatever of this measure becoming law this session, and he would therefore advise his honourable friend Mr. Wilson to remove it from the Paper, and send it to keep company with his own (Mr. Waterhouse's) Breach of Trusts Bill.

The Hon. Mr. BRANDON thought it would be well to pass these two or three clauses tentatively, pending a general measure which should be brought in next session. No doubt there would be half a dozen more of these trustee companies formed between now and then.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY would advise his honourable friend Mr. Wilson to let the Bill go, as there was no chance of getting it through the Council this session. He was surprised at the opposition this Bill received in quarters from which opposition might not have been expected. After the recent discussions on the subject it was quite evident that some measure was required, and he thought it would be the duty of the Government during the recess to prepare a general measure for introduction next session. But, under the circumstances, he would advise his honourable friend Mr. Wilson to gracefully accept the inevitable.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND thought those who called these Trustee Bills a nightmare might find that the companies would become a nightmare, and that their being allowed to deal as they chose with trust funds, &c., might lead to results which would be an unpleasant recollection to honourable members for the rest of their lives. He hoped it would not be so; but, if it were, his honourable friend Mr. Wilson would have the pleasing consciousness of having striven hard to prevent it. The honourable gentleman was entitled to the thanks of the colony for his attempts in the matter. And he (Mr. Richmond) would remind the Council that this was not altogether a private member's Bill. It was a Bill framed by and brought in on the recommendation of a Select Committee, and was therefore entitled to more respect than an ordinary Bill introduced by a private member.

The Hon. Mr. ACLAND said it was perfectly evident that there was no hope of the measure becoming law this session. As to the assertion that these Bills had become a nightmare, because some or other of them had been on the Order Paper nearly all the session, he did not

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think that was a nightmare much to be feared. The honourable gentleman proposed to put of his Bill till next day; but, if he really wished to go on with his Bill, why did he not do so at once, as he had two hours before him to dis-cuss it? If he did not take the present oppor-tunity, he had better drop it, as there was not the least chance of passing it this session.

Amendment agreed to.

The Council adjourned at five minutes to nine o'clock p.m.

#### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Thursday, 30th October, 1884.

Hickson's Offices—Maharara and Tutane Blocks—Mangahao Block—Lime Tariff on Railways—Ealing Railway-station—Thompson's Cement—Trust Funds—Kumara Tail-race—Westport Colliery Company—District Railways—Beet-rook Sugar Bill—Westland Education District Substitute Bill division Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair at half-pasttwo o'clock.

PRAYERS. 🧀

#### HICKSON'S OFFICES.

Mr. W. D. STEWART asked the Minister of Justice, Whether he is aware that Mr. Hickson, a mining agent, and son of Warden Hickson. on the Otago Gold Fields, uses for the purposes. of his business the Government offices occupied by the said Warden? He might state that, when in Dunedin recently, a deputation waited upon him in reference to the subject referred to in this question, and he was asked to bring the matter before the House.

Mr. TOLE replied that no representations had been received by the department in regard to this matter; but, since the question was put on the Paper, he had made inquiries, and ascertained that Mr. Hickson, jun., was merely assisting his father. Instructions had been given to the effect that he should not be allowed to carry on any private business in the Government offices.

MAHARARA AND TAUTANE BLOCKS.

Mr. SMITH asked the Minister of Lands, If, in view of the great demand that at present exists in the Hawke's Bay District for bush land, he will have the Maharara Block, Seventy-Mile Bush, and the Tautane Block, near Wainui, which are now being surveyed, thrown oper for sale on the deferred-payment system at a early a date as possible? There had been for some time a great desire on the part of a num ber of persons to obtain land in the Seventy Mile Bush and other parts of the Hawke's Bay District on the deferred-payment system, and they had been unable to obtain them. H hoped the Hon. the Minister of Lands would be able to see his way to have these blocks thrown open for sale.

Mr. BALLANCE replied that the Maharary Block was now being surveyed for sale, and Parliament was asked to vote a further sum of £1,900 for the purpose of road - construction | within it. Already about seven miles of roadlines had been cleared of bush, and it was proposed to clear and partially form about nine miles more. The area to be opened was ten thousand acres. Of the Tautane Reserve, about twenty thousand acres were now being surveyed. Six miles of road had been made into the block, and further works were under consideration. Both blocks would be opened for settlement at the earliest possible time, after the survey and road-making were sufficiently

# MANGAHAO BLOCK.

Mr. BEETHAM asked the Minister of Lands, If the Government will take steps, at as early a date as possible, to open up the Mangahao Block, Wairarapa East County? He had been induced to ask the question from the fact that a sum of money had been on the estimates for some time past for the opening-up of this block, and the settlers naturally expected that it would be expended. If this vote could be dealt with, a very valuable block of land would be opened, containing both rich land and valuable timber. He hoped the Minister of Lands would be able to give a satisfactory assumme that the money would be expended in the manner indicated.

Mr. BALLANCE replied that a sum of £1,500 for opening out roads in this block appeared on the estimates. The best means of access to the block was through the Mangatamcko Block, the purchase of which was not yet completed. Morts would be made during the present sesson to get the land made accessible, with a wiew to its being offered for sale.

# LIME TARIFF ON RAILWAYS.

Mr. ROLLESTON asked the Minister for Public Works, If, in any fresh adjustment of the milway tariff, he will consider the present comparative inequality of the charges upon the carriage of lime on the southern railways, the carriage from Millburn to Christchurch, a dishance of 262 miles, being £1 0s. 11d., and from Temuka to Christchurch, a distance of 89 miles, being 12s. 6d. per ton, thus placing the producers of lime in the Hilton District at a sadvantage as compared with those in the Millburn District?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that of course his question, amongst others, would come moder notice when the tariff generally was being reviewed during the recess. From the way in which the honourable gentleman's question was worded it would appear that a great discrepancy existed, which really was not the case. The carriage of goods—which included the handling, &c .- was far more costly for short distances than for long ones: therefore the mileage rates gradually decreased as the journey lengthened.

#### EALING RAILWAY-STATION.

Mr. WALKER asked the Minister for Public Works, If the Railway Department are proposing to close the railway-station at Ealing?

If so, will he take the matter into further consideration?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that this was not a regular passenger-station, but had been open for some time for telegraph purposes. It was now found unnecessary to continue to keep it open, there not being work enough to keep a clerk employed, and therefore the clerk would be removed, and the station worked n the ordinary way as a flag-station.

### THOMPSON'S CEMENT.

Mr. JOYCE asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether he has received any report of the result of tests made at the railway testingshed, Pipitea Point, to determine the value of Portland cement made by T. J. Thompson, Bluff; and, if so, will he assist in the development of the industry by the construction of a siding to connect the works with the railway; also whether the Government is still open to receive tenders for the supply of locally-manufactured Portland cement? In explanation of this question, he might say that the Mr. Thompson named therein had been for many years engaged in endeavours to utilize the mineral, or rock, in the neighbourhood of the Bluff in the manufacture of Portland cement. He had persevered under the most adverse influences and against the highest scientific authority in the colony, but he had succeeded so far as to produce what he (Mr. Joyce) believed to be a perfect cement. But during these years he had invested his capital, and nothing had been coming in; and now, having reached almost the point of success, it was necessary that he should receive some encouragement or assistance, otherwise he would probably have to discontinue his efforts. He thought the Minister would find hardly any difficulty in answering the first part of the question; for he believed that a most decided opinion had been expressed, on very high authority, that what had been produced was virtually a good cement. With reference to the second part of the question, he thought the Government might assist in the manner indicated; and, as to the third part of the question, he was aware that the Government had offered to take a hundred tons of cement from anybody who made it, but he was not aware whether they had arranged to take a hundred tons from any particular person already; but, in any case, so large an amount of cement was used in the public works of the colony that it was quite possible the Government could take even a second hundred tons if it were produced.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said his reply to the first part of the question would be in the affirmative; but he did not think, in the interests of this gentleman or in the interests of local manufactures, it was advisable at present to make public the nature of the information which he had received. The honourable gentleman had stated that Mr. Thompson had produced a perfect cement. There was no doubt that the discoveries which Mr. Thompson had made were of a very valuable nature, and there

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was every indication that he was in the right track, and might be able presently to produce a very good cement. With regard to the question of assisting by laying down a railwaysiding, he regretted to say that the department did not see their way to do that, at any rate at present. As to taking a considerable quantity of this cement from Mr. Thompson, the Government were perfectly willing to take it from him or from any other person, and, in the interests of local manufacture, they had specified that, in the case of cement locally produced, the test to be applied should be much below the ordinary test: in fact, it was to be one-third less than the test imposed in respect of imported cement. That, he believed, would be a great assistance to the local manufacture. If Mr. Thompson should succeed in making a marketable and useful article, there could be no fear about the Government being prepared to give him a bonus or to assist him in some other way; but he could not hold out a hope of assistance being given in the direction the honourable member for Awarua suggested in reference to a railwaysiding, because, in the opinion of the department, it would be an exceedingly unwise thing to do at present.

#### TRUST FUNDS.

Mr. MOSS asked the Colonial Treasurer, If he has observed an error in the printed report of the answer to Question No. 345 in the evidence attached to the report of the Select Committee on Trust Funds; and if he will have it corrected before the evidence is finally bound in the Appendix? Honourable gentlemen had no doubt seen a paper which had been widely circulated containing the report of the Select Committee appointed to report upon the Trust Funds—a Committee appointed by the Legislative Council. On looking over that document he found, in the Commissioner of Insurance's answer to a question, that there was an error, either in reporting or in the compilation of the report, as to the nature of the security held by the Trust Funds in respect to debentures of the Parnell Borough. The statement made in the report was that the annual value of the assessable property was £14,000; whereas it ought to have been stated, as he discovered on making inquiry, that the total amount of the loan was £14,000, and the annual value of the assessable property was £26,500. It might not appear a very important matter; but, as the statement affected the character of the investments of these Trust Funds, it was desirable that it should be corrected, in order that, when the document appeared in the Appendix to the Journals, there might be attached to it a correction.

Sir J. VOGEL said he had only read very superficially, owing to want of time, the report to which the honourable gentleman referred; but he had been told by one of the witnesses that he had made a mistake in giving his evidence. His (Sir J. Vogel's) answer to him was that he had better try and get the Council to allow him to alter it. He (Sir J. Vogel) had no power to alter evidence taken by the Council.

Mr. E. Richardson

If he attempted anything of the kind he should no doubt be guilty of a breach of privilege, and probably render himself liable to some serious personal consequences. Witnesses who had been careless enough, on revising their evidence, not to see that they had made mistakes must communicate with the proper authority to get matters set right. He had no power in the matter.

KUMARA TAIL-RACE.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Minister of Mines. Whether it is true that Mr. Warden Giles wrote to the Minister of Mines a letter dated 11th August, 1884, in which proposals were submitted for settlement of the Kumara Main Tail-race dispute; and, if the answer be in the affirmative, has the receipt of such letter been acknowledged or acted upon, and, if not, why not? He had no doubt the answer to the first part of the question would be in the affirmative, because, by the courtesy of the Minister of Mines, he had received a copy of the letter that was sent by Mr.Giles. The second part of the question was rather important, because, after looking carefully through the correspondence, he did not find that there had been any answer sent to this letter, though it was dated "11th August, 1884." He might also say this, and he said it as an act of justice to Warden Giles: that, having carefully gone through the correspondence, he exonerated that officer from the charge which he made against him last session, which was that he had been biassed in dealing with the question affecting this particular work. The letter referred to in the question was as follows:-

" Warden's Office,

"Hokitika, 11th August, 1884. "SIR,—I believe, although I have no official knowledge of the fact, that miners at Kumara are renewing their application to the Government for cheaper water. What I have to say upon this subject relates only to those who are using the Government sludge-channel, and is intended to draw your attention to a view of the matter which, although implied in former communications, has never perhaps been set forth so explicitly as seems desirable. view I mean is this: that the earlier owners of tail-races connected with the sludge-channel would probably be held by any tribunal of arbitration to have a fair claim for compensation for direct loss sustained by them in consequence of the Government permitting a larger number of tail-races to open into the sludge-channel than it could properly accommodate. In the absence of any special bargain to the contrary, the agreement by the Government to allow holders of tail-races to sluice into the sludgechannel would be taken to give the right to sluice for a fair number of hours every day that they desired to do so, with some obvious exceptions, and to send down anything that in the ordinary way of sluicing would pass down their own boxes. This right has been restricted and in great part taken away by the admission of a larger number of tail-races than the sludgechannel can freely accommodate, owing to which the working hours have been shortened,

1884.]

and the mode of working restricted by regulations which, however necessary in the circumstances, yet are regarded by the miners as vexatious.

"This view of the matter may, I think, be clearly gathered from the remarks made by Mr. Gordon and myself in our report of February last; but I have thought it desirable to direct attention to it more particularly now, because, when in a *quasi*-judicial capacity I gave my approval to the new Regulations, I felt myself debarred from entertaining the question of any claims which could not be made good in a Warden's Court.

"The Government would probably find a free or cheaper supply of water the easiest mode of giving such compensation to parties who have a good claim to it, pending any further steps that may be taken for the permanent relief of the sludge-channel. The later comers, or back-number men, have not so strong a claim for compensation; but even they may allege that, when they were allowed to open into the sludge-channel, they might fairly expect that its capacity had been calculated be-tore permission was given them, and that their use of it would not be so greatly restricted as has turned out to be the case.

"I must take this opportunity of saying that m my opinion the source of the whole complication is to be found in the first code of Regulations that was framed, the 5th clause of which prohibits any person from using the sludgechannel without the written permit of the Manager. It is these permits that, I think, have done the mischief. The right to use the sludge-channel ought to have been inseparably attached to the registered certificate for a tailmcc. In that case the priority of right would have been, like priority in all other gold fields rights, a thing fixed and readily determinable, and the later comers would have been in the same position as inferior holders of water or

"The Hon. the Minister of Mines,

"Wellington." He regretted very much that Warden Giles had been placed in the position he was placed in. The late Minister of Mines was to blame. It was altogether wrong to ask any Warden to advise and draft regulations, seeing the same hereafter might come before the Warden to be reviewed, ministerially and judicially; but, at the same time, he thought the Warden had

acted strictly impartially.

Mr. BALLANCE said the honourable gentleman had afforded sufficient proof to the House that the letter was received. It contained proposals which had been considered and acted upon, as the honourable gentleman well knew; but it did not appear that there was any neces-

sity for going further. Mr. SEDDON thought the department might have acknowledged the receipt of the letter, which had never been done.

WESTPORT COLLIERY COMPANY. Mr. GUINNESS asked the Government,-

(1.) By what authority, and for what consideration, 150 acres of freehold land at Wallsend, Grey River, containing valuable coal deposits, was recently sold to the Westport Colliery Company? (2.) Whether the company had com-plied with all the conditions of their lease and other agreements with the Government before the date of the sale? And (3) If the company has not yet complied with the conditions and agreements, what steps do the Government intend taking to compel the company to carry out such conditions and agreements?

Company.

Mr. BALLANCE said the question raised a considerable amount of debatable matter which might be held to reflect upon a previous. Government, and, in replying, he should read the departmental answers. The reply to No. (1) was, "The lease; £750, being at the rate of £5 per acre." No. (2): "Not strictly to the very letter." No. (3): "The department is satisfied that the company is substantially complying with the conditions of the lease; and, as the company has expended a large sum of money in developing the mine, it is not proposed to take any steps at present to compel it to carry out the conditions and agreements of the lease to the very letter." No. (4): "Copies of the correspondence are already before the House." Copies of the correspondence had been laid before the House. It was not necessary to add anything more, because if he did it would open up debatable matter. The question itself was full of debatable matter.

Mr. GUINNESS did not feel satisfied at all with one part of the reply, and would move the adjournment of the House. It was said that the lease was the authority. Now, the power to purchase was only given in the event of the company performing certain conditions, and the property could only be purchased within the last five years of the term. lease was only granted in 1875 or 1876, and it was for twenty-one years; and how could the last five years have arrived on the 7th of June last? It was a matter which he thought the Minister ought to explain, and not depend solely upon the reply of the department.

Mr. BALLANCE did not think it was necessary to go into the question. If the honourable gentleman wanted more information with regard to this question he should have given notice of motion, so that the House would be in a position to debate the whole subject. He considered that a question of this kind should be answered in accordance with the informa-tion supplied by the department. He was not prepared to justify this lease, or the conditions of the lease. It was done by a previous Government. There was no doubt the subject required to be very carefully considered; but in answer to this question he did not propose to discuss the merits of it at all. The last Government were entirely responsible for what had been done in the matter.

Mr. SEDDON said the only thing that it appeared should be dealt with was this: that there had been clearly a violation of the covenants of the lease. There was also this: that the colony had suffered in more than one way, and that this particular district had also suf-

fered. The facts of the case were these: that

the Westport Coal Company owned some properties at Westport, and they bought up a rival

mine. The covenants in the lease of that rival mine provided that so many thousand tons of

Westport Company bought up this mine, in-

stead of going on with the work and giving a re-

turn to the Government railway there, and to the

people of the whole district in providing work, they shut up the mine altogether. He thought

the Government should force them to work the

mine. They purchased the freehold of the mine entirely, thereby saving the royalty upon

the coal, which was in itself a very serious loss

to the colony. No doubt an explanation could

be given by the late Minister of Lands; but he

(Mr. Seddon) had no hesitation in saying plainly that this was one of those jobs which the late

coal should be taken out yearly.

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the honourable gentleman's law. He had no doubt it was excellent. At any rate, the House was bound to take the opinion of the Attorney-

Company.

Government were noted for. Mr. STOUT wished to say one or two words, because it had been represented in another place that the present Government were responsible for the sale of this lease.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—It was distinctly stated that it was the late Government.

Mr. STOUT. — It was represented clearly that the sale of this coal reserve was made by the present Ministry. The honourable member who put this question was quite warranted in doing what he had done. He (Mr. Seddon) did not intend to say that the Government, in dealing with leases, should always insist upon the strict letter of the conditions being carried out; but what he said was this: that an unfair and illegal thing was done; that the Government had allowed the company to obtain the freehold of a most valuable coal field, which he was informed would affect the re-mainder of the lease, and make it practically theirs. This was done without parliamentary sanction. The right to purchase within five years only existed if the conditions of the lease had been strictly carried out by the company. They had not been strictly carried out by the company; and allowing the company to buy this piece of land practically meant that the Crown had no longer any power to compel the carrying-out of the conditions of the lease -namely, mining and other things. fore, if the late Minister of Lands thought this was a case for the interference of the Crown, he should have brought it before Parliament and have had an Act passed for the purpose. He did not wish to bring in too much debatable matter, but this seemed to have been an act which should naturally be sanctioned by Parliament, and both branches of the Legislature might at all events have been consulted in this matter, especially, according to the honourable member for Geraldine, as grave constitutional questions always arose when acts were done in which both branches were not consulted; and in this case neither branch was consulted, and the lease was practically set aside, and he submitted that the law had been practically set aside.

Mr. ROLLESTON was not going to question

General as determining any question of law. But the honourable member for Kumara had said that this was one of the jobs of the late Government which they were noted for. He thought that was a very unnecessary remark, but it was a remark which he and other honourable members were constantly making, and this was just one of those mares'-nests which the honourable gentleman misrepresented and turned to political purposes. Now, he (Mr. Rolleston) was not afraid of the most exhaustive inquiry into the whole transaction. The thing was perfectly clear, straightforward, and aboveboard. The original lease provided for the purchase of a considerable portion of the freehold. He was not there to say why that was done. The lease was granted by the present Minister for Public Works, and his name was upon it. The lease provided for the purchase of fifty acres within the first five years of the tenure of the lease, if they carried out the conditions. The Government that had power to make a lease had to judge with regard to a thing like this: They had to judge how far the conditions of the lease were possible, and how far circumstances over which no company and no Government could have any control-as was always the case with coal mines-justified any concession in the matter of the lease. The position was this: Fifty acres were due, and, unless the Government were going to set aside the lease absolutely-which he held would be an absolutely unjust thing to do-they were entitled to the fifty acres-Mr. STOUT.—If taken up within the time.

Mr. ROLLESTON.-Quite true. They did not take it up within the time, because the Government were taking steps—as the House was well aware-to enforce the company going on in a bona fide manner with the working of the coal mine; and the company, he might say, satisfied the Government. The Premier knew all this very well; but he was only putting forward little bits of things; he was not stating the case fairly. The Government, at the instance of the former member for Greymouth, were constantly pressing this company, keeping them up to the mark, and there were some conditions laid down by the Government as to the amount of money they should spend in working this mine. Another shaft had to be sunk, and other large works had to be gone into, as it was otherwise absolutely impossible for the company to produce coal. At any rate, it was impossible for the company to carry out the lease in respect to producing a certain amount of coal; but, in respect to spending & large amount of capital in opening the mine, the company gave full effect to the spirit of the agreement between them and the Government; and it would have been an unfair thing on the part of the Government to take an advantage of this company which it could not fairly have taken of any other, and which it would not have contemplated if it had had before it all the circumstances of the case. It was

Mr. Seddon

impossible to prescribe with positive accuracy the conditions on which the coal mine should be leased, when the Government were the judge of whether the company was working in the best way or not. The lease made in 1874 by the present Minister for Public Works provided that the company should purchase fifty acres, that area covering the whole of the plant and the whole of the ground necessary for working the mine and securing the plant. If the Premier, before trying to get political capital in the House, had taken the trouble to consult the department, he would have found that the remainder of the land, beyond fifty acres and up to 150 acres, was of the very roughest character. He would have found that there were certain complications involving the interest of people who were scattered on the ground, in whose interest the Government stipulated that only rentals within certain limits should be exacted. The fifty acres, which gave them the whole control of the thing, was already due, unless they were going to forfeit the lease at once. That was the position. But, as to the remainder, as he read the lease the stipulation was rather in favour of the company, that they need not buy up the remainder till the last fre years; and it appeared that allowing them now to complete the purchase and pay up the money, and to settle the question that had arisen between them and these squatters upon the land, was a matter of very large importance, and that the arrangement that was made was made with the approval, consent, and concurrence of the Commissioner under the Act, and he believed of the Waste Lands Board of Westland, and the papers showed that the whole thing was most carefully and judicially considered. Anybody who read the correspondence between himself and the company would see that on his part there was anything but a disposition to go one bit beyond the letter of the law; and in this case, where he did go beyond the letter of the law, it was, as he had explained, with a view of settling a number of difficult questions, and in the interests of the Government quite as much as of the company. He wished to repeat, again, that the fifty acres covered the whole plant and everything that gave the security under the lease to the company, and the question was simply and solely one whether there might or might not be an extension of the ground which should be bought within a certain time; and that extension, he maintained, it was in the interests of the Government to settle at once. Another point, which the Premier had not alluded to, was this: If the Premier had taken the trouble to look at the maps—and his (Mr. Rolleston's) recollection was pretty good of them—he would have seen that the maps absolutely showed the coal ran out in this ground in the part outside the fifty acres. That was distinctly shown. Any honourable gentleman might see the diagram of the country, and the geologist's name upon it, and he would see that the land did not run into the coal-the coal

an the other way.

Mr. STOUT understood the honourable

gentleman to say that the lease provided for the sale of the fifty acres during the first five years.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Yes.

Mr. STOUT said it was the last five years, not the first five.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON would read from the lease, as follows:—

"And it is hereby further declared and agreed that it shall be lawful for the lessees, their successors or assigns, at any time during the last five years of the term hereby granted, to purchase the fee-simple of any part of the land hereby demised whereon any of their works may be, at the price of five pounds per acre:

"Provided always that they shall not at any one time purchase less than twenty nor more than fifty acres, and that the total amount of land so to be purchased shall not exceed one hundred and fifty acres, and such purchases, if made, shall include all rights to mine for coal beneath the surface: Excepting and always reserving to the said lessor, her heirs, successors, and assigns, and her, his, and their servants and workmen, full and free liberty at all times of taking, holding, and using such portion of the land purchased as aforesaid as may be required for the purposes of the following works, that is to say, for making, constructing, maintaining, using, and working any railroads, tramways, or other roads, paths, and ways, and other public works in, through, over, and upon the said land so to be purchased as aforesaid, and all necessary erections and buildings thereon, for the purposes of any such railroad, tramway, or other roads, or for the purposes of any such public works as aforesaid, without being liable to pay to the lessees, as such purchasers as aforesaid, or their successors or assigns, any compensation whatever for any land taken for or in the construction of the said works hereinbefore mentioned, or any or either of them whatsoever, and without being liable to pay any compensation to the lessees, their successors or assigns, or their tenants, or others claiming or holding under them, or by reason of the exercise of any rights hereby reserved to the lessor, her successors or assigns; and also excepting and reserving all mines of gold, silver, and other metals and minerals (except coal) upon or under the same.

When this lease was being drawn, he could well remember about the question of allowing them to buy at all. It was simply this: that the company insisted upon, and the Government gave way to, their right to buy the land on which their mine works were erected. It took him entirely by surprise, when this matter came before the House, that the company could be allowed to buy until the end of their lease. That was the intention of the Government as to the 150 acres. It was after the lease was drawn up the Government consented, on the recommendation of the Superintendent of Westland, that the additional quantity should be agreed to be sold to the company.

Sir J. VOGEL did not like the use of slang words in the House, but when they were used one should clearly understand what was meant. The honourable member for Geraldine said this was a "mare's-nest." He (Sir J. Vogel) this was a "mare's-nest." He (Sir J. Vogel) always understood a "mare's-nest" to mean something in the nature of a mistake. Now, it was impossible to have listened to the halting explanation of the honourable member, and knowing that the facts were incorrectly stated, without in future considering that a mare's-nest might bear the nature of a questionable transaction. The honourable gentleman was exceedingly ready to impute motives to others, and to talk about "red-handed plunder." He (Sir J. Vogel) did not wish to do so—he was far from doing so—but he simply wished to remark that, if the honourable gentleman were to be treated in the same manner as he treated others, one might point out that, although this might, by the honourable gentleman's own terms, be a very questionable transaction, yet a colleague of his, who was very largely interested in the company, had benefited by his laches. He mentioned this, not for a moment for the purpose of attributing any wrong to the honourable gentleman or his colleague, but to warn him to be very careful in future in imputing motives to others. He (Sir J. Vogel) was willing to believe that this transaction resulted from the slovenly practice of relying too much on departmental advice. The honourable member for Geraldine had made a mistake through not knowing the terms of the lease, as he ought to have done. He had only power to sell land, on which the works of the company were situated, during the last five years; whereas he sold land, on only a small part of which works were situated, much before the time he was warranted to sell by the lease. Putting the different parts of the honourable gentleman's explanation together, he first of all said that the land was so broken as to be valueless, and that he was stealing a march on the company by inducing them to purchase. Then he told the House that it was required for purposes of settlement. He (Sir J. Vogel) could not reconcile the two statements. The fact was that the honourable gentleman had to make an explanation with a very feeble knowledge of the subject. He (Sir J. Vogel) was willing to believe that the honourable gentleman did not do anything wilfully improper, but was misled into doing so by allowing himself to be guided by others, and not looking into this question as it was his duty to do. It was a very serious matter, because a large mine which should be of great value to the locality was shut up by allowing this land to be sold. The company could snap its fingers and shut up the deposits of a very valuable district in order to work another mine that might be worked with a larger amount of profit. That was the result of carelessness. He would not attribute anything more to the honourable member for Geraldine than carelessness.

Mr. ROLLESTON desired to make a personal explanation. The Colonial Treasurer said he imputed nothing more to him than carelessness. He thought the Colonial Trea-surer was one of those gentlemen who, he might say, lived in glass houses and should

not throw stones. Though he impliedly said that he simply accused him of carelessness, he made what would go forth to the country by implication an accusation of having done a corrupt act.
Mr. SEDDON rose to order. This was not

Company.

a personal explanation.

Mr. SPEAKER thought the honourable member for Geraldine was going beyond a mere personal explanation, and was tending in the direction of making a personal attack on the Colonial Treasurer.

Sir J. VOGEL desired to say that he put the

most favourable view of the case.

Mr. ROLLESTON said the Colonial Treasurer had insinuated that he had done this with a view to benefiting his colleague. The Ministry were behaving extremely badly about this thing. If they had the minutes and in-formation before the House now which were before him at the time this thing was done it would wear an entirely different aspect. He was at a disadvantage because he had not the papers before him. He had stated his recol-lection of the case, and he was inclined to believe from recollection that there were other papers which the Government were at the present time suppressing—suppressing the information which they ought to give to the House when an accusation of that kind was made. He had only to say that the Colonial Treasurer appeared in a very unamiable light.

Mr. SEDDON rose to order. The honourable gentleman was not making a personal

explanation.

Mr. SPEAKER said only one member should be on his legs at the same time, and he would therefore ask the honourable member for Geraldine to sit down. What was the point of order to which the honourable member for Kumara rose?

Mr. SEDDON said that charges were made against the present Government of suppressing correspondence. That was not a personal ex-

planation.

Mr. SPEAKER said he had already called the honourable member to order for tending to make attacks instead of confining himself to a

personal explanation.

Sir J. VOGEL wished to say that the honourable member for Geraldine was misrepresenting what he said. He said that he (Sir J. Vogel) had made an accusation against him, and had endeavoured to put his conduct in the worst light before the House; whereas he had endeavoured to put it in the most favourable light.

Mr. ROLLESTON said all he had got to say was that Ministers had only stated part of the case, and not the whole, and had put the case, so far as he was concerned, in a very improper

light. Mr. BARRON wished to point out that, on looking over this lease, he found certain conditions in it with which the persons who leased this mine had certainly not complied, and must therefore have forfeited all rights of purchase of this land. It was quite evident that the company had been anxious to get the Go-

Sir J. Voqel

vernment to give them the right of purchase outside the terms of the lease, so that they might validate that lease, which they had undoubtedly violated by not complying with its conditions. For instance the lease provided

. they, the said lessees, their successors or assigns, shall and will raise and get from the said mine, and have ready for sale and delivery during the first year from the date of these presents, at least two thousand tons of consumable coal, and during the second year at least five thousand tons of such coal, and during the third year and each and every sub-sequent year of the said term of twenty-one years at least fifteen thousand tons of such coal."

There was another provision in the lease—a very important one-which for greater clear-

ness he would venture to read:-

"And also shall and will during the continuance of the said term, according to the best of their judgment, skill, and discretion, continue uninterruptedly (suspension and stoppages by reason of any fault or failure in the mines or any inevitable accident only excepted) to work and manage the said mines, and shall and will get, raise, carry away, sell, and dispose of the said mines, layers, seams, and strata of coal, and search for the same, and dig and drive such pits, shafts, levels, and openings as may be deemed requisite and likely to tend to the discovering, winning, or getting the same, and shall carry on such works in a skilful and proper manner, and according to known and usual modes of working; and shall and will from time to time during the continuance of the said term keep the said mines properly ventilated, and have and construct therein all needful walls, pillars, and other necessary supports, and shall and will raise and draw the slack and rubbish that may be gotten in the said mines, or so much thereof as may be necessary to preserve the said mines clean and not exposed to any damage by fire, and dispose of the same in such manner as shall be approved of by the lessor: And, for the purposes and also to the intent that the said works shall be continued and carried on with full and unabated vigour and effect during the continuance of the said term, that they, the lessees, their successors and assigns, shall and will constantly employ in and about the said mines and works a proper number of good and skilful colliers, workmen, servants, and labourers, and also of horses, cattle, carts, carriages, engines, machinery, utensils, tools, and other articles requisite for the carrying-on and working of the said mines in such a workmanlike manner as shall tend to the mutual benefit, profit, and advantage of the said several parties hereto, or their respective representatives or assigns.

The lease showed very clearly that it was granted to the lessees only on condition that the mines should be vigorously carried on; and there was no doubt at all that, so far from carrying on these mines, the persons who obtained the lease from the Government simply lay by and waited until some turn of events might make their property valuable; and, after they had been guilty of serious breaches of the covenants of their lease, they came to the Government of the day, and, being able, apparently, to bring political pressure to bear, they got the Government to make a sale of this. freehold altogether outside of the terms of the contract. He submitted that this was a perfectly fair question to raise on a motion for the adjournment of the House, and he was very glad it had been raised.

Company.

Mr. GUINNESS said one point appeared to. have been missed. So far as he could ascertain, this purchase had only been recently completed—within the last few weeks—and the first intimation the inhabitants had of it was. by reading a paragraph in the West Coast Times of a report of a meeting of the Waste Lands Board, in which it was stated that the Westport Colliery Company had paid £750, and had a license to occupy 750 acres at Walls-end. So far, members were not in a position to know exactly where the land was situated; but, if he was correctly informed, it included the whole of the Township of Wallsend and the land through which the present railway runs. No doubt the company had purchased the property on each side of the line; and therefore the whole of a rising township-one that was daily increasing in importance—had become the private property of this company,. and the company could now snap their fingers at the conditions of the lease. He felt certain that it was the duty of the Government. to make further and strict inquiries into this matter, because the inhabitants of the place felt very much aggrieved indeed, as they had never been able to get any satisfaction from this Westport Colliery Company regarding the titles to their property. At one time they leased their properties from the original lessees at exorbitantly high rents, in the hope that the company would proceed to work, as, if the company proceeded to work, the value of the properties they had leased would from year to year increase. Instead of the workings going on, however, they came to a standstill, and the persons who had erected valuable buildings had to allow them to dilapidate and decay. Some eighteen months ago work was resumed: again, and for a short time property seemed to increase in value, and population again to be attracted there. Then the works suddenly be attracted there. Then the works suddenly ceased again until five or six months ago, and the next step in the proceedings was that the whole of this valuable property where the buildings had been erected was purchased, without, so far as he could see, any proper arrangement having been come to in the interests of the persons living there, and who had built houses on land they considered to be waste lands of the Crown, and over which they considered they would be able to get some title from the Government. Now these people would have to deal with the company, which could make very exorbitant terms. The authority to lease to the company was only given, he believed, on the 17th June: that was when the last session of Parliament was being held;

I have said, the resolution now before the

House is free from any objection of a constitutional character. I have therefore only to show to the House the necessity for dealing

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and it was only while this session was being held, three or four weeks ago, that the com-pany had paid the £750. The late Minister of Mines—the honourable member for Geraldine -had said that the company had a right to buy so many acres within the first five years of their term: but they had not exercised that right; and now they had bought 100 acres, the right to purchase which was not to be exercised until within the last five years of their lease, and then only upon the strict and proper performance of the covenants.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—How was it given?

Mr. GUINNESS.—If the honourable member would look at the last proviso of the lease he would find that. It was to be taken during the last five years, and the company's lease was not quite nine years old yet. He (Mr. Guinness) thought it was certainly the duty of the Government to take some steps affecting this sale. The Crown grant had not yet been issued, and they should prevent its being issued.

Motion for the adjournment of the House

negatived.

# DISTRICT RAILWAYS.

The House went into Committee to consider the following resolution: "That the difficulties surrounding the railways constructed under the District Railways Act, and the hardships to which the ratepayers are subjected in connection therewith, are such that this House considers the Government should seize a favourable opportunity to enter into agreements to acquire the said lines by lease and purchase; such agreements to be subject to the ratification of Parliament, and to contain a provision that, until Parliament has had an opportunity of giving such ratification, all pro-

ceedings against ratepayers shall be stopped."
Sir J. VOGEL.—The Government, Sir, has brought this resolution down now in a form which makes it quite unnecessary that there should be any prolonged discussion upon it. The matter has assumed a shape which renders it utterly impossible to say that there is any infraction of the privileges of the other House, or anything further before us than to deal with a question which requires to be dealt with. Honourable members are aware that this question has been placed before the House on several occasions as one that demanded to be dealt with during the present session, and a Bill was introduced and carried through this House dealing with it in a certain manner. The reason why the manner in which it was proposed to deal with the question was placed in a Bill was that it was necessary, under the terms proposed, that certain securities should be created. That Bill did not meet acceptance in the other House, and, on the ground stated that it was not open to amendment - although I take leave to doubt that position - it was thrown out without any attempt being made to amend it. It became evident then to the Government that something must be done with regard to a question which demanded to be dealt with during the present session in some way or another. As

with the question. This is not a question which has been created by the present Government. It is a question connected with a difficulty which we have inherited from those who came before us; and, in fact, the honourable member for Egmont frankly admitted, when the Bill was introduced, that it was a question which required to be dealt with, and he voted for the second reading. It is true that some of his colleagues did not feel themselves bound by the same obligation, and opposed the Bill very actively; but, I take it, the honourable member for Egmont gained a great deal in the esteem of the House by the frank and dignified manner in which he acted. That this question requires to be dealt with there can be very little doubt. But, before proceeding to that part of the question, I should like to say a few words upon what has been mentioned with regard to myself by some honourable members who are rather more apt to charge things upon others than to answer charges made against themselves. As regards my connection with the Bill, so far as my recollection goes the first I heard of it was when the honourable member for Hokonui called upon me, at the request of the Premier, he having, on behalf of his constituents, addressed himself to the Premier, who, seeing that it was a question of finance, asked him to call upon me. Subsequently that honourable gentleman, and other honourable gentlemen representing district railways in other parts of the country, did me the honour to call upon me on the same subject; and, later still, a deputation came from Auckland with reference to the Rotorua Railway. It was utterly impossible for me to say that I could not deal with the question because I had an interest in it. When the question was raised in this House some years ago as to the right of honourable members to vote upon subjects in which they had a direct interest, the then Speaker, Sir Dillon Bell, ruled that, if a question was before the House in which an honourable member was directly and exclusively interested, he could not vote upon it; but if it was a question in which, amongst various subjects, an honourable member was interested in one or two, he was entitled to vote upon the whole measure; and, upon that principle, pastoral tenants of the Crown have voted on Land Bills in which they are largely interested. With regard to this measure, when I first moved it I frankly told how I was interested in it. I am a shareholder in the New Zealand Agricultural Company, and that company is one of the landowners who will be largely rated in respect to one of the railways. Therefore, as a shareholder in that company, I have an interest, such as any ordinary ratepayer would have. I have no interest whatever in any of the railway companies. That is my position in regard to the matter, and I wish the House to understand it. In

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regard to the necessity for dealing with this matter, this is how it stands: Year after year the Government of the day has had to deal with the matter, and to bring in various measures, the purport of which was to make more easy the position of the shareholders in the companies, and to give them a greater hold upon the ratepayers. Last year a mea-sure was introduced which was really in the nature of a personal and private Bill, in respect to which neither the companies nor the ratepayers had had an opportunity of being heard, and it inflicted upon them unprecedented changes. That was passed at the end of last session, much to the surprise of many honourable members who were not here to attend to it. Since then proceedings have been taken against the ratepayers, and actions are now pending. That is one aspect of the question. Another aspect is that the Trust Funds hold a considerable amount of securities under this District Railways Act, and all I can say is, as these funds are in my charge, that I cannot consider it possible to leave the question as it now stands. With regard to one of the milways the Trust Funds hold £75,000, of which \$40,000 is guaranteed by the Treasury. interest on that £40,000 not being paid, the Treasury had to meet its guarantee. It stands, therefore, that the colony has now to pay overdue interest to the Insurance Department on the guaranteed portion of the debentures. That is not a position which, as Treasurer, or as a responsible person in charge of the Insurance Fund, I can deem satisfactory. Then, as regards the £85,000 held by the Insurance Fund, the interest upon that is overdue, and, as there was no guarantee by the Treasury, it is a debt against the company. With regard to £20,000 of another railway company, the interest has not been paid for a period of some-thing like three years. That cannot be hold to be satisfactory. But that position gives us an opportunity of getting this railway at a lower price than we otherwise should. Now, I am prepared to say that, in my opinion, it would have been better for us to have come down with a resolution like that we have now proposed, instead of the Bill we introduced. I am under the impression that we can get the railways for less under this resolution than under the Bill. The Bill provided for a costly system of taking the value by a Court of Inquiry, and our friends, who are so numerous here, and indeed throughout the country — the lawyers—would have very largely benefited by the measure had it been passed, as the proceedings would have been of a protracted nature. If this resolution is passed it will be then open to the Government to make bargains with the companies on more favourable terms than were proposed by the Bill. This resolution is out of the category of any measure or any resolulution which we should not be at liberty to introduce into the House again, and, when it is passed, the Government will understand that they are to endeavour to make a good bargain for the colony, and the best bargain they can make for the colony, in respect of these rail-

ways. All the information required is at the command of the Public Works Department. As far as ascertaining what these works should have cost at the time they were constructed, we can look at the contracts that were let at. the same time, which will give us that information. We can obtain information as to the price of plant at that time and the price at. the present time. All the information with regard to what should be the cost at that time, and with regard to the value at present, can easily be ascertained by the Public Works Department; and it will be open for us to make a better bargain for the colony than we might have done even under the District Railways Bill. Therefore I do not regret the events. that have brought us to this resolution. this resolution is carried, I have no doubt the Government will be able to lay before the House, for its acceptance next session, agreements which will be highly favourable to the colony. Now, as regards these railways themselves, there is not one of them which it would not be worth the while of the colony to acquire. As I have repeatedly pointed out, we shall be obtaining them on terms which will be a precedent of a very valuable nature for constructing hundreds of miles of branch lines in the future—upon the terms that the ratepayers and the Government shall jointly bear the risk of the cost of the railways. These terms we still consider to be binding upon us. We shall ask the House next session, if the agreements are ratified, to provide that the ratepayers shall share with the Government. the risk up to 4 per cent. on the cost of the railways. We shall be settling the matter as far as concerns the Trust Funds, and as far as respects the ratepayers, and we shall be obtaining for the colony railways under favourable conditions. As I have said, the responsibility of making favourable agreements is thrown upon the Government. If we fail in doing so, the House may, of course, ratify the agree-The Government will ments or it may not. have to consider the burning question as to the present condition of these railways, to make the most favourable terms they can, and tobring them down in the form of agreements next session, which agreements will be open to the ratification of Parliament—that is, of both Houses of the Legislature. If we were merely to enter into negotiations, and they were not put into a concrete form, there would not. be the same opportunity of getting favourable terms that we shall have under this resolution. It must be borne in mind that it is not only the pressure that the Government will bring to bear upon the companies which will operate in favour of the colony obtaining these railways. cheaply under this resolution; but the com-panies themselves will have it in their own mind, and will say, "It is for our interest to agree to favourable terms with the Government, because it is more likely, if we do so, that the Legislature and Parliament will ratify the agreements when they come be-fore them." By passing this resolution as itnow stands, you are placing machinery in the

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hands of the Government to obtain the railways cheaply, and you are placing inducements in the way of the owners of these railways to make terms with the Government such as this House would be likely to accept. I feel it to be unnecessary to detain the Committee any longer upon the subject. I am aware that there are some honourable members who look upon this question with a jaundiced eye—who think that there is political capital to be made out of it. Perhaps it is to be regretted that we have put them to the trouble of preparing specches, and making lengthy examinations amongst the books, because, as the matter now comes before them, it is entirely deprived of any aspects which could form an excuse even for allowing them to enter upon such subjects of discussion on the present occasion. Although I may regret that they have been unnecessarily put to this trouble, I would remind them that it is one of the incidents common to parliamentary life, and that they must not allow their disappointment to carry them the length of forgetting what the resolution is now, and so trying to discuss it differently. Now that the constitutional question is entirely eliminated from the original question, I am at a loss to know how any better plan can be proposed for dealing with the subject than the one which is comprised in this resolution. I shall be very happy to make any further explanations later on, if they are required.

Major ATKINSON.—I am very glad indeed that the question is narrowed down from the real constitutional question, as submitted the other day, to the one for consideration now, as to how we are to deal with the subject so as to relieve the ratepayers and shareholders of the district railways. It is well known, Sir, that I am one of those who have always held that sooner or later it would be absolutely necessary for the colony to take over these district lines of railway—that it would not only be necessary but advantageous to do so. though I did not like the Bill at all to pass through the House in the form proposed, I voted for it from principle. I was not prepared to resist the details when I found that there was a strong majority in the House to carry it in what I thought was an unfortunate shape. But that is all past. We have now come to this question, as to how this matter can be dealt with in such a way as I believe the majority of this House really desire. I take it, what they want is this: They want to have before them, in as simple a form as possible, what is the value of the railways; what the companies are prepared to take for them; and what are their general financial positions. That is what they want to know. I believe that, when that knowledge is before us, the House will be prepared to buy at a reason-able rate each and all of these lines. I know that there are honourable gentlemen in the House who think we should not touch any of them—that we should not take any of them -that we should not render relief to either the ratepayers or the shareholders—that it would be a dangerous precedent, as they went into

this matter with their eyes open; but I hold very distinctly that this House is bound, by the legislation which we sanctioned, to place both the ratepayers and the shareholders in the position to carry out what undoubtedly was the intention of those Acts: that is to say, I hold that we are responsible to the extent of bad legislation. I am not going to follow the Treasurer into the question of bad securities, or any question of that sort. I am sorry that he has raised it. He has raised it on several occasions, and I am almost tempted to go into the question; but I am not now going to argue it, because I do not want to get into a debate upon, as it were, a side-issue. I sak the Committee not to believe for a moment that there is any reason whatever to buy these railways on the ground that the colony has not ample security for any advances that it has made. It could take possession to-morrow, and secure itself a large margin over any advances made; so that the Treasurer materially weakened his argument when he asked the House to take them over on those grounds. There are other and better grounds for doing so. Now, as we are agreed—and it seems to me I am speaking the views of the majority of the House—as we are agreed that all that is to be done is to ascertain the value of these railways and report to this House next session, I say it is only a question of words in the agreements. The words of this resolution do not seem to me to convey quite as clearly as I should like the ideas that the Treasurer has expressed. I understood him to say that he does not desire the colony to be bound in any way by the agreements which the Government are going to make during the recess; that he has given up all idea of that. What he wants is to be in a position to make agreements with the companies, for the purpose of this Parliament ratifying them, if they should think right to do so during next session. Now, if that is so, I hope the Treasurer will agree to an amendment of a few words, with the view of making the resolution fully express the views, as I understand them, which he has placed before the Committee. The amendment I propose is, To strike out the words "to be subject to the," with the view of inserting these words: "or any of them, to be provisional only, and to have no force or effect except by the ratification of Parliament." Now, I hope the Government will see their way to accept this amendment, as it will only carry out what I understand to be their own ideas, as expressed by the Treasurer; and then a very difficult matter will be in a fair way of being settled.

Sir J. VOGEL.—The honourable member for Egmont has spoken so fairly, and has shows such a disposition to meet us, that I have me doubt that, were he and I in a room together for a few minutes, we could easily agree as the precise form which the resolution should take. But I should like to point out to him that, whilst he is correct in saying that we do not profess to be able to bind Parliament, he went much further in supposing that the Go



vernment would not itself be taking a considerable amount of responsibility. It seems to me that, if the honourable gentleman agrees, as he does, that we should endeavour to stop proceedings against the ratepayers - that is, he agrees with the last part of the resolution-he should admit that we must give the companies some substantial reason for supposing that the agreements we are making will be carried out. Nothing is more clear than this: that Parliament is not inherently bound by contracts made by the Government. The Government may make contracts, but, if the contract made is on the face of it one to the disadvantage of the country, Parliament is not bound by it. This principle has been laid down very explicitly by Mr. Gladstone in a very memorable and celebrated case, in which the money agreed to be paid was absolutely placed upon the estimates by the Government, who then advised the House not to vote the money, and declared that the House ought not to carry out the contract which had been made by the Government. Therefore, of necessity, any agreement made by the Government must be subject to the ratification of Parliament; but, on the other hand, a Government that takes the responsibility of entering into an agreement of this kind may place its own position and character at stake, and accept the respon-sibility of carrying out such agreement. If we carry out the resolution as it stands, we shall not be able to bind the House, but we shall take upon ourselves a large amount of Ministerial responsibility. The honourable Ministerial responsibility. gentleman, however, is not satisfied with the last few words—"such agreements to be subject to the ratification of Parliament, and to contain a provision that, until Parliament has had an opportunity of giving such ratification, all proceedings against ratepayers shall be stopped"—but wants to still further weaken the resolution by saying, "such agreements, or any of them"—we will accept those few words, if the honourable gentleman likes-"to be provisional only, and to have no force or effect, except by the ratification of Parlia-ment." I do not think we can put in those words, for, if we did, I do not see how we could expect the companies to enter into agree-I think the honourable gentleman should be satisfied with the assurance that the Government will take care to make agreements which the House will be likely to approve; and, if we are willing to take the responsibility, I do not see that there should be any objection. The resolution standing in our name amounts really to this: that, whilst the Government undertake the responsibility of making these agreements, they leave it to the House either to ratify or not, as they like. The Government take such an amount of responsibility upon themselves as will be an assurance to the shareholders of the companies that it is worth while entering into explanations of what arrangements they are willing to make; and therefore I object to the words which the honourable member for Egmont proposes to add—"to be provisional only, and to have no force or

effect except by the ratification of Parliament." The words, "such agreements to be subject to the ratification of Parliament," cannot by any possibility be said to take it out of the reach of Parliament to effectively deal with these agreements; and if we are to induce the companies to make these agreements, and to stay, temporarily or otherwise, proceedings against the ratepayers, the Government must be in a position to exercise a certain amount of personal responsibility, apart from any power of binding the House. Then, there is also the question which the honourable member himself pointed out earlier in the session in regard to one of the railways, and that is the question of the conditions under which the Insurance Fund would be willing to relinquish the forty thousand pounds' worth of securities that are guaranteed by the Treasury. The honourable gentleman himself has pointed out, and a Committee of the Upper House has pointed out, the ex-ceptional value of these debentures. The relinquishment of these debentures must be a matter for the company to deal with—the Government will not deal with that at all; and therefore, when we come to fix the price of that railway, there will have to be some provision for the redemption of these debentures. As the honourable gentleman has said, they will have to be redeemed; but, in the meantime, they have been guaranteed, and the Insurance Department holds them with the advantage of that guarantee. The position the Government wish to be in is this: to put before the House contracts in a complete form even to details. This afternoon I have laid on the table the draft of a contract for the carriage of mails, in such a shape that the House may easily say "Yes" or "No." There is everything in the contract from first to last. Penalties are provided for; ships, officers, and in fact every point is dealt with; and the House can easily say whether it will ratify the contract or not. If the House disapprove, the contract ceases to have any force whatever; but there it is in its complete form before the House, and the House can say "Yes" or "No." Now, that is precisely the manner in which we should like to deal with contracts for taking over these We wish to have power to make railways. contracts, and then leave them for discussion, and ratification or the reverse, by Parliament. Our aim is to make everything as explicit as possible, leaving the decision an open question. admit that the honourable member for Egmont was most reasonable in his remarks, and I think I have made my remarks in a reasonable and moderate spirit.

Major ATKINSON.—There is no doubt that the honourable gentleman is very reasonable and moderate in his remarks; but I should have been glad if he had been less reasonable in his remarks, if he had only accepted the amendment which I proposed. The honourable gentleman tells us that what he wants is to have power to deal with this matter in exactly the same manner as he has dealt with this postal business. If that is so, all that he has to do is to move that the Chairman do leave

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the chair, and not ask us to pass any resolution | at all. I believe the House would be quite willing to do that, and to leave the matter in the hands of the Government, as was the case with the postal matter. Parliament would then be absolutely free to ratify the contract or not, as it thought fit. What I fear is that, by passing the resolution in the form in which it stands, we may be committing ourselves to any agreements which the Government make; but, if we pass no resolution, then we shall be free from all responsibility of the kind. I am quite willing to leave full power in the hands of the Government without any instructions whatever, and, if the honourable gentleman sees his way, I shall be glad to let the resolution be withdrawn, and leave the Government to deal with the matter during the recess.

Mr. STOUT.—If the honourable gentleman wishes to do that, let him move that the whole matter be left in the hands of the Government. Major ATKINSON.—There was no resolution

about the postal contract.

Mr. STOUT.—The distinction is perfect and In reference to the postal contract the usual course has been followed, and we had authority under the Post Office Act. But we are in this position in dealing with this matter: The Bill that was introduced relative to the subject has been rejected, and, unless we had some resolution of the House authorizing us to enter into negotiations for an agreement, we should be laying ourselves open to a charge of having been guilty of unconstitutional conduct. If the honourable gentleman will move a resolution something to this effect: that the Government may make such agreements as they may consider desirable for submission to Parliament next session, we shall be ready to accept it, because that would give us authority to do something. At present we have no authority, and there is no analogy between this case and the postal contract.

Major ATKINSON.—I shall be happy to do what the honourable gentleman wishes. I have a resolution which will no doubt meet his views entirely. Certainly it meets mine. in substitution for the present resolution, and runs as follows: That the difficulties surrounding the operation of the District Railways Act, and the evils to the shareholders and ratepayers, are such that it is expedient that the Government should invite proposals from the several companies during the recess, and that those proposals, together with full reports on the financial position and prospects and the commercial value of each line, be laid before Parliament at next session, with a view to the purchase of the district railways by the colony." That will give the Government the full power

it wants.

Mr. STOUT.—That would be nothing at all. Major ATKINSON.—I wish to meet the population of I can. I do not honourable gentleman, if I can. want Parliament to be told next session that they gave the Government such authority this session that they are honourably bound to carry out the agreement made. I am willing to do anything that will leave the Government

free, and this House free, to deal with the matter; but I do not want to pass any resolutions which will be thrown in our faces, as it were, next session—that we permitted the Government to make this agreement, that we may punish the Government by turning them out, but that we are honourably bound to give effect to the agreement.

Sir J. VOGEL.—There does not appear to be very much between us. The honourable gentleman refers to the postal estimates, and says, "Why not deal with this in the same manner? Allow the Government to take the responsibility, and come before the House for ratifica-tion." I would respond that we are quite willing to do this if the House will give us leave. That is to say, there are many ways of dealing with the district railways: we might lease them or buy them. It is clear that, if the House says to us, "Deal with this question on your own responsibility in the direction of buying the lines, but we are bound by nothing you do without ratifying it," that is quite practical. We want to have leave. I should be quite willing, if this meets the honourable gentleman's views, to accept this as an amendment: "That the Committee agree with the Government dealing with the district railways in such manner as they think best, so long as the action they take is subject to the ratification of Par-

Sir G. GREY.-I wish to move an amendment to this effect: After the word "That," to insert, "during the recess inquiries be made for the purpose of collecting information in reference to the present state and financial prospects and value of such railways, in order that the same may be laid before Parliament immediately after the commencement of next session."

Mr. STOUT.—We are willing to accept a resolution of this character: "That the Government be requested to come to the best arrangements they can with the district railway companies with a view to the acquisition of the lines by the colony, such arrangements to be subject to the ratification of Parliament."

Mr. J. W. THOMSON.—What I object to in the last amendment is the word "ratification." That seems to mean that all the House would have to do next session would be to say "Aye or "No" in regard to the agreement. I should like to have the word "review" substituted.

The amendments moved by Major Atkinson and Sir J. Vogel were, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. BRYCE .- It is really the word "agree ment" that we are afraid of, and we think the word "arrangement" means precisely the same thing. This may be held to be binding upon next Parliament to confirm in some way. It appears to me that the argument of the Colonial Treasurer was to that effect, or else he would not have argued against the introduction of the words declaring that the agreement should not have any effect until after ratification. Now, that is really the question: whether an agreement is to be entered into

which is to have an effect upon next session of | Parliament. Parliament.

Mr. STOUT.—How? Mr. BRYCE.—Well, I say that is what we are afraid of-that the agreement will have an effect; and the objection of the Colonial Treasurer to the introduction of words guarding against the effect seems to show that he himself thought the agreement might be made, under the resolution, to have an effect upon Parliament next session. If we are all of opinion that the agreement or arrangement is not to have any binding effect at all upon the House next session, then I think that we might manage to express that in words; but I understood the Treasurer to object to the expression. Therefore I think that in his mind there must have been a belief that the agreement would have, in some way, an effect upon the next House. I was rather surprised that he ob-jected to those words. At any rate, if it can be made clear that any dealings with those railway companies are to have no effect upon the House next session, and that we shall be perfacily free to consider the question, and shall not be bound in honour or otherwise to adopt

them, I shall have no objection.

Sir J. VOGEL.—The honourable gentleman did not exactly understand me, and I would like to make the matter clear. It is within the power of the Government to make any amagement it likes during the recess; and, if it makes an arrangement which it has no right to make, which is outside the law, and requires to be legalized, if Parliament does not choose to legalize it the arrangement is waste paper. There are circumstances when the Government take the responsibility, saying, "We will make an agreement subject to the approval of the House, and we will recommend its approval." They sometimes take the more serious step of saying, "We will not only recommend approval to Parliament, but we will stake our official position upon the consequences." Take, for instance, the case of the resolutions which were carried at the Sydney Convention. I am not aware exactly how they stood in the mind of the bonourable member for Egmont, but I understand that he considered himself pledged to the Australian Governments merely to recommend those resolutions to Parliament; or he might have considered himself bound not only to recommend them, but to support them, and, if the recommendation was not accepted by the Legislature, to retire from office. I will take a case that is more simple—that is, the causes that led to the retirement of the hte Government in Queensland. They made an agreement with a London syndicate for the construction of an immense extent of railway by land grant. They staked their position on it, and, when the House carried the second reading by only one vote, they recommended dissolution; and a dissolution took place. After the dissolution they, being in a minority, witred. They, in fact, made a Government would it be for one moment supposed that Parliament would in honour have been bound to fulfil such an arrangement? No man in his

The new Parliament did not approve; but the contrary. Therefore, when honourable members put in words which not only, as I may say, safeguard the House, but also imply that the Government may not exercise governmental responsibility, then we object, on the ground that you are not arming us with the power of getting these actions suspended, or of making good terms for you. Leave to us the usual recourses and discretions of Government, and we are quite satisfied. We are by the resolution saying that it is the desire of the House to acquire these railways, but that we are not to bind the House without its approval of the arrange-ment we make; and it is left entirely to our own discretion how far we shall personally bind ourselves in the way of recommending this agreement. The amendment, as it was proposed by the honourable member for Egmont, we did not consider armed us with sufficient power. That was why we were not willing to accept it. The honourable member for Waitotara must disabuse his mind that we have any arrière pensée in the matter; that we are keeping back anything which we ought to dis-close. The matter stands on the footing that the power of ratification remains with the two Houses; but the Government, exercising the usual power of Governments, have to make an arrangement subject to the approval of Parliament, and to pledge themselves to such an extent, as far as their own personal position is concerned, as they deem desirable.

Mr. BRYCE.—The honourable member mis-

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took me if he thought I meant to prevent the Government taking any governmental responsibility it pleased in the matter. I had no such intention as that. The Government, of course, in making an agreement, might say that they would recommend it to Parliament, or could assure the company, if they liked, that they would stake their existence upon it. I should not have any objection to their doing anything of the sort. What I have urged is very reasonable -that it would be an implication that, because a preliminary resolution of this kind is passed this session, next session Parliament would be bound in some way, in honour, to give effect to the arrangements made with the Government. That is what we fear, and do not like to

agree to.

Mr. STOUT.—I think the best reply to the honourable member for Waitotara is to give an illustration. On a former occasion resolutions were before this House authorizing the Government to enter into contracts for certain mail services. I refer more particularly to the San Francisco mail service. It was asked why the terms were not set forth, and the reply was, "If you fix the terms, the other side will know the limit of the authority to which we can go, and we shall be placed at a disadvantage in negotiating a bargain." Supposing the Government in office entered into a contract to give a company one or ten millions,

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senses would say such a thing. So it is here. This resolution leaves the whole thing open for the ratification of Parliament; and that was intended when notice was given yesterday. That is why the words about the ratification of the arrangements were put in. If the House desires that something should be done in this matter, I hope it will agree to the course which the Government propose.

Sir G. GREY.—I should suggest that the word "approval" be put in, instead of "ratification." I think it is much plainer.

Mr. STOUT.—I shall not object to the word

"approval" instead of "ratification."
Mr. ROLLESTON.—What does "the ratification of Parliament" mean? Does it mean that it only goes to the Upper House in the form of an appropriation, or that the agreement is to be made subject to an enactment which will go to both Houses?

Mr. STOUT.—It must be by Act. It is absurd to suppose that it can be done otherwise. I cannot say in what form that Act will be. "Parliament" means the Governor, the Legislative Council, and this House.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—The honourable gentleman need not talk about this being absurd, for I believe that before the year is over this House will find itself in the same absurd mess as it was in over the Brogden contracts. We were then told that the good faith of the colony was pledged, and were led into a series of compromises which landed the country in great difficulties and expenses.

Sir G. GREY.—We require to exercise great caution in this matter. There is a difference between the instances cited by the Premier and that with which we are now dealing. The instance which the Premier referred to related to a contract with a body outside the colony. What we have to deal with here is an enormous influence in the colony, every kind of persuasion that can be brought to bear—intimidation, in some cases—and all that in the colony. Therefore I think we must weigh every word with the greatest possible care, and no illustration drawn by the Premier from a mail contract is applicable to the case we have to deal with here.

Mr. LEVESTAM.—I should like to make a few remarks on this subject. The Colonial Treasurer told us to-day that, first of all, this measure suggested itself to him in consequence of the honourable member for Hokonui speaking to him; after that a number of members waited upon him; and he received petitions from Auckland in this matter, all of which decided him in taking the course that he has adopted. If that really be a reason which would induce him to take certain action, I have considerable doubt whether it was the principal reason that induced him to take action in this case. If that were the case, then long before this he must have acceded to the request of a number of people who petitioned that Bible-reading should be introduced into schools. The honourable gentleman told us, further, that during last session an Act was passed which produced very great changes; that it was done at the

end of the sossion, and that the ratepayers had no opportunity of being heard in the matter. I think the honourable gentleman is now asking us to do a similar thing. At the end of the session he is introducing a measure on which the general taxpavers of the colony have no chance of being heard. He says that they must give some satisfactory reason to the company, because they intend to stop them from exercising their rating power. What does that mean? Simply this: that we shall still be bound by the agreement which they choose to make. If that is not so, I cannot see the meaning of the words which the honourable gentleman made use of just now. The difficulty, as far as I can see, is this: that the basis upon which this agreement shall be made is not set We had it in the former resolution that the basis should be the cost of construction. The Colonial Treasurer says we can very easily ascertain what the cost of construction was at that time from the Public Works Department. He says it can be easily ascertained what the cost of construction would be now—we can see that from the schedule prices in the Public Works Department. What has that to do with the matter, unless it means this: that the purchases are to be made on the basis of the Bill moved in this House? And that is the basis to which we take exception. We say these railways should be bought in accordance with the present commercial value. The honourable gentleman says it is merely a question of dealing in the best way with a very urgent question. Whether it is or not I cannot say, but it has not been discussed in the country, except, perhaps, in those parts where the people are mostly interested. I fail to see that it is so very urgent. The people in those district bought land subject to certain conditions. I has been stated by the Premier that they wen not aware that they were subject to this rating but no one knows better than the honourable gentleman that ignorance is no plea in law and if these people - unfortunately for them selves-made a bad bargain, it will be no hard ship to them if the matter stands over till ner session, with a view to being released from a future liability.

Mr. W. D. STEWART. — May I ask the Government to insert the word "authorized instead of "requested"? — because a requested arrange with every company; whereas "a thority" would enable them to arrange with any companies they like.

Mr. STOUT.—I do not see the distinction. Mr. W. D. STEWART.—If the Governme

Mr. W. D. STEWART.—It the Governme are "requested" to do a thing, they are bout to do it, which is not the case if they a "authorized."

Mr. STOUT.—I am afraid that is almost a proaching Scotch metaphysics.

Mr. W. D. STEWART.—I shall move, The the word "authorized" be substituted for "quested."

Mr. ROLLESTON.—I do not wish to prolo this debate, but I feel I should not be do justice to what I said before in relation to the

matter if I did not express my dissent from the terms of the resolution. Sir, what a considerable number of members of this House objected to was that Parliament should authorize an engagement to be entered into without knowing in detail the different circumstances of different cases. It was believed by very many members of this House that these railways differed very largely in their circumstances; and the other branch of the Legislature, I believe, came to the conclusion they did largely upon that ground. I think one of the principal reasons of their dissent from the Bill was that the Goremment proposed to deal with all these lines In this House those who differed from the Bill passed, pressed earnestly upon the Government that, before Parliament should be asked to enter into engagements for the purchase of these railways, particulars should be placed before them. I, Sir, felt, when that was denied to us, that it was a great injustice to us and to the country; and, as I feel that now, I feel that if I do not say what I think I should be doing very wrong. I say that the amendment the honourable member for Auckland East proposed seems to me to be a fair compromise in this matter. That amendment proposes that we should have the fullest information before us, and it indicates that Parliament will be willing to consider equitable terms when they know the merits of each of these lines; but it does not authorize or request the Government to enter into engagements from which, if once entered into, there would be practically no withdrawal.

Dr. NEWMAN. — Before putting the resolution, I wish to say that it seems to me the resolution is not sufficient in this respect: We were asked to buy these railways for the express purpose of relieving these ratepayers. Now, if we pass that resolution without amendment, the companies can go on enforcing their claims for rates.

Mr. STOUT.—I do not think the honourable member has heard the amendment. The word "arrangements" would cover that. The arrangements the Government would make would not for a moment be one-sided: in fact, the charge made against the Government by some members is that it is only the ratepayors they are looking after. I will not say anything in reply to the honourable member for Geraldine, in case I might go further than is desirable. That is the sole reason. I do not wish to go into a reference to this matter, simply on that account.

Lir. FERGUS.—Sir, my object in rising is to get a distinct statement from the Government that these people who are pressed, and pressed severely, by these companies, shall not be proceeded against for rates. As my honourable friend the member for Hokonui states, this largely affeots a large number of deserving settlers, who, if proceeded against for the rates, will be uttorly unable to pay them. Is it not a fact that an injustice is being perpetrated upon them? But for that, I, for one, should not vote for the measure at all.

Mr. MOSS.—I am enyself as strongly con-

vinced as ever that I should be acting wrongly towards those whom I represent if I agreed for a moment that this burden should be transferred from the shoulders that ought to bear it to the shoulders of those whom I represent, and who, I think, certainly ought not to bear it. That is the view I have taken from the first; but I do not intend to urge it further now, as the time seems to have gone by, and there seems to be a general acceptance of the amendment. I shall vote against it; but I should be very glad if the Hon. the Premier would add to his new proposal something to this effect: "and the arrangements shall be submitted to Parliament immediately after the opening of next session." Sir, these district railways have, in a great degree, been the pivot on which the whole of the politics of this session turned; and I much fear that the same thing may occur next session. If they are to be dealt with, I should like to see them dealt with as soon as the next session opens; otherwise they may be amply used during it as a means for breaking up the different parties, and, if I may use the expression, of disorganizing the whole Parliament. For that reason I hope the Premier - whose chief duty, I presume, is to see that Parliament is not disorganized; to see that the Opposition is kept useful, as well as his own party—will add to his resolution something to that effect, which may bind the Government to bring down the proposals as soon as possible after the opening of the session.

Mr. WALKER .-- With reference to the remark made by the last speaker, that this session the whole of the business has hinged on these district railways, I do not think the remark is more applicable to this session than to the legislation of the last few years-in fact, ever since the original Act was introduced. I believe the question has been constantly before Parliament ever since, and consequently the House may fairly consider that it has never been settled. I should like to give an instance to the Committee of how, in the case of one of the railways, the matter really stands. The Rakaia-Ashburton Forks Railway was constructed under the original Act of 1877, and it has three rates authorized to the 31st of March, 1889. The total value of these three rates comes to £7,941 19s. 8d., and, of these three rates, only £600 has been collected. That is, £600 has been collected out of, in round numbers, £8,000. Since then another rate is due for the year ending on the 31st March, 1884, £1,795 19s. 2d., and is now awaiting the Minister's certificate; so that nearly £10,000 is due to that company in rates, of which they have only been able to collect £600. Well, I would ask those members who are conversant with the collection of rates whether it would be possible, whether it would be fea-sible, to collect those rates, whether they could expect that three years' rates could be collected unless something were done by this House, or by somebody able to set these matters right. I consider that this statement with reference to the railway, which is as sound as any rail-

way possibly can be, is a very sure proof of what must be the circumstances connected with all the other railways; and therefore it is evident that the subject deserves not only the most earnest consideration of this House, but their very best endeavours to set matters right. I really believe that one of the most serious imputations against the bona fides, so to speak, of the present Ministry has been the fact that not one of them represents the agricultural interests. While in Committee on the Land Bill the other night we had all sorts of taunts thrown out. It was said the Premier knew nothing about agricultural or pastoral pursuits —that he was a baby and a theorist—and all sorts of other things were said; but I maintain that the measure which was unfortunately lost in the other Chamber, and the loss of which this resolution endeavours to a certain extent to remedy, proves incontestably that this Ministry really have the interests of the agricultural districts of the colony and of the Middle Island at heart. There is hardly an agricultural district from the very north of Canterbury to the Bluff which is not more or less interested in this question of the railways, and therefore I maintain that, in the interest of the agricultural districts in that Island, the Ministry are only doing their duty in pressing the consideration of this question most emphatically upon Parliament.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—I should like to ask how the agriculturists of the other parts of Canterbury, for instance, and Otago are interested in this matter. When these railways are taken over they will have to be worked at reduced rates, and the average returns from the railways will be very largely reduced. The consequence will be that, whatever hopes they may now have of a reduction in the grain rates under the existing hard circumstances of the grain-growing business, those hopes will then be altogether gone. Then, there are £8,000 of rates due from these ratepayers. We do not know the size of their holdings; we do not know who they are; we know nothing at all about them. And this money is to be taken out of the pockets of the general taxpayers of New Zealand: and yet we are told it is done in the interest of the agriculturists of the colony. The thing is perfect nonsense.

Mr. MONTGOMERY.—I should not have spoken upon the matter of the rates if it had not been for some words used by the honourable gentleman opposite. I understand that there is a general consensus of opinion that the resolution as it now stands is to be passed. The view I take is this: that it will not bind the House next session, and that every member of the House can come back here perfectly free to vote against any arrangement the Government may make. The late Government made a positive agreement with the New Zealand Shipping Company in respect to a postal contract: that came before the House, and it was refused ratification; but the Ministry did not think it necessary to resign. I can therefore understand that the Ministry will come down next session and say to the House, "We have made certain

arrangements with a view to acquiring these railways. These are the arrangements, and we now submit them to the House. The reason why we have made these arrangements is this: that the railways are worth so much, there are so much rates due that can be collected," and so on. Then we shall have all the information that is possible before us when we are asked to give a vote. I say it is absolutely necessary that we should have that information, and I only regret that it has not been given already. The information that I and other honourable members wish for is something respecting the rates, and who are the ratepayers who are to be relieved. Now, we have some information, with regard to one of these lines at all events, upon this subject of rates, to be found in the Mataura Ensign of the 24th March, 1884. If honourable members will examine a statement put forth in that paper they will see that there is evidence given that the Waimea Plains Railway Company should have a great deal more than the other railway companies. Here are some of the facts as given by the paper: The annual rateable value of the Waimea Plains Railway District is £28,469, and the rates on that, at 3s. 4d. in the pound, amount to £4,744. Now, who are the ratepayers? Out of that £4,744 the New Zealand Agricultural Company are rated to the extent of £3,003 2s. 6d. These are some of the poor ratepayers that the country is going to relieve. I will not mention individual names, but there are names of gentlemen mentioned in that paper, and some of them are members of this House. And, now, let us see about the poor suffering ratepayers, who will be broken up if we do not relieve them of these rates. I take 213 out of 471; and how much has each to pay? There are 38who have to pay £1; 15, 16s. 8d.; 31, 13s. 4d.; 54, 10s.; 46, 6s. 8d.; and 59, 3s. 4d. And these are the poor people who are going to be broken up. It is the three-thousand-pound men who feel the rates. That is the information we should have had before we were asked to assent to a Bill of such a character as that which was introduced, and that is the information which I, as a representative of the people, shall require before I assent to any arrangement being finally made. I have now only to add that I should have liked the Government to have inquired into the whole matter, and then they would have been prepared to come down next session and make such proposals to the House as would be for the good of the country. without asking the House to come to any such resolution as this.

Mr. STOUT.—I cannot allow the remarks of the honourable member for Akaroa to passwithout some reply, as he has, in quoting from the *Mataura Ensign*, really misrepresented the facts of the case. He has left 250 ratepayers altogether out of the question. There are about some 500 ratepayers interested in the question, and he has only quoted figures with regard to some 200, as showing the interests of all the smaller ratepayers. I understand that those with regard to whom he has given figures are not settlers in the district, but that

Mr. Walker



they are people who hold small town sections. I would ask the House to consider what 3s. 4d. in the pound is to a small farmer who has also to pay his county and road rates. And, besides that, a demand is made on them for two years' rates in one year, so that that makes the demand 6s. 8d. in the pound. If there were only 100 small settlers who were affected in this way, instead of the 250 whom the honourable gentleman has left out, I say that it would be the duty of the House to take their case into consideration.

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Sir G. GREY.—The Premier has omitted to inform us whose lands were to have great value given to them by having this railway made. Are his clients to put large sums of money into their pockets because value has been given to their lands, and are all the farmers throughout the country to be taxed for their benefit—to pay their loss on the railway? This £600,000 or £1,000,000 which is to be imposed on the country would mean, if it were imposed on Great Britain, something like fifty millions of money. What would be said if Mr. Gladstone and one of his colleagues—one the solicitor of and the other a chareholder in a company—were to ask the British Parliament to relieve them of some £1,000,000 of liability? That is what passing alaw of this kind would mean in Great Britain. The question for us to consider is, whether we are to put a tax on the whole of the people of New Zealand in order to give increased value to the land of the New Zealand Agricultural Company. Why am I, who live in the remote North, to be called upon to pay for such a purpose? Is that to relieve the small farmers? I say the honourable member for Akaroa was quite right in all that he said; and yet we are to be compelled to assent to this arrangement. He says that there is a general consensus in favour of this resolution; but I do not admit that. Many of us think that the arrangement is wrong, because we shall not be able to stop there next year. If we once authorize arrangements to be made it will be argued that the meaning of that was that, if the arrangements were reasonable, they were to be given effect to,-that that was the understanding,—and we shall be pressed on that point. That is what will happen unless we are very careful in the wording of the resolution. This, then, to my mind, is a matter of the greatest possible importance. It was truly said by one honourable gentleman opposite that this subject has occupied the attention of Parliament for years. I have received punishment of the most severe kind for having opposed the attempt originally made to introduce this mea-We were asked then to pay £450,000, and that was an attempt made to compel us to buy the Waimea Plains Railway. I re-fused to accede to that, and I have no doubt whatever that my fall from office was in great part attributable to that. I saw a gentleman in this House to-night sitting behind this chair, who at that time was a member of this House, who gave me information that such was the case; and it was known to a

large number of members that such was the case. I was persecuted afterwards in many cases for the same reason. The House has been for years divided on this subject; and I tell honourable gentlemen that, if we go away now without something being done, the contest will be continued, and it will involve us in unending disputes until special arrangements are made; because these people are very powerful, of which there can be no greater proof than that two gentlemen are sitting on that bench who are largely interested in the New Zealand Agricultural Company.

Colonel TRIMBLE.—I think that something should appear in this resolution pledging the Government to place before the House some information in reference to these various railways, before Parliament is called upon to pronounce in favour of purchasing them. It seems to me that, unless we have a little more information in reference to these railways than has yet been afforded to us, we should come to the consideration of the question next session very much in the same position that we are in at the present moment. Nothing could illustrate the want of information before the House more effectually than the speech made by the honourable member for Ashburton this afternoon. The statements he made evidently took honourable gentlemen by surprise. If I under-stood him aright, he stated, in reference to one of the railways under consideration, that there are now arrears of rates to the extent of £9,136, and he stated that, out of the total amount of rates levied, only the sum of £600 had been obtained. I think the House ought to know the ratepayers who have paid this £600 of rates. I venture to say—and I shall be glad to be contradicted if I am wrong-that the £600 has been paid by the poorer ratepayers.

Mr. WALKER.—No.

Colonel TRIMBLE.—The honourable gentleman will have an opportunity of giving some particulars on this point, and I shall be glad to hear them. I think I am justified in saying that a considerable proportion of the larger ratepayers have not paid the rates. No doubt it will be on record.

Mr. WALKER.—The honourable gentleman

is not quoting my figures correctly.

Colonel TRIMBLE.—Will the honourable gentleman give us the figures? He said that the rates amounted to £7,941, and that, out of that amount, only £600 was paid. Mr. WALKER.—No.

Colonel TRIMBLE.—Perhaps the honourable gentleman will correct me. The honourable gentleman will not correct me, and I take it for granted that I am right. On the 31st of March, 1884, there was another rate, amounting to £1,795. Mr. WALKER.—No; you are speaking with-

out book

Colonel TRIMBLE.—He said that there were two amounts, making a total of £9,736, and that out of this sum £600 had been collected. I have given the honourable gentleman the opportunity of correcting me, and he would not do it, and I presume there must be some reason for his not doing so. Here we have an amount of £9,736, which, according to the scheme the Government brought down to the House — and there is nothing to show that the Government do not intend to carry the idea out during the recess-would be added to the original cost of the railway. I do not know what the original cost was; I have nothing to show what it was; but, whatever the cost was, we have £9,000 and upwards to add, by way of rates, to that original cost at the present time. That is all I know of this Ashburton Railway. Then, there are some other railways, and I will state all the information I am able to get in reference to them, and it will be seen at once that the information is very meagre indeed, so meagre that it would be wrong to legislate upon this basis. The honourable member for Akaroa gave us some facts connected with the Waimea Railway. He referred to the rates that were levied up to the 31st March, 1884, amounting to £4,744. Now, that is the total amount of rates to be levied for the year. The honourable gentleman pointed out the very significant fact that one company whose land had been materially benefited by that railway—indeed, it was principally for their benefit it was madewere in arrears to the extent of £3,003; that some 200 of the ratepayers owed small amounts ranging from £1 down to 3s. 4d.; and he very properly stated that he could not believe that the Bill was introduced for the relief of those persons. Many of the shareholders were, notoriously, wealthy men. The arrangement could not be intended merely for the sake of the poorer ratepayers. Then, there was a challenge by the Premier, upon this ground: He says, "You have given the men who have to pay 3s. 4d. in the pound; but the great bulk of the sufferers are the medium men." Well, who are these medium men? The Colonial Treasurer is down for £5 13s. 4d., and that is not an amount to press hardly.

District Railways.

Mr. STOUT.—He is down wrong.

Major ATKINSON.—He is on the list. Colonel TRIMBLE.—The man whose name is on the list is bound to pay, unless he can obtain relief. I fail to see that any of these people could obtain relief, except on the ground that they were not the right persons. I find one other person is set down for £325 13s. 4d. Perhaps he is the wrong man. Then, another person is down for £132 3s. 4d. I should state that all the others are very small amounts, such as the £5 18s. 4d. I have just referred to. According to the notice of motion put before the House, and which the Government intended to carry into effect during the recess, the principal ratepayer that would be relieved under this arrangement is that company; and the particular persons who have received most benefit from the railways, and who were the main promoters of it, will be the main gainers by any change to be made. The railway is there for the benefit of their property, just as much as if they were the proprietors of it. So much for the proportion of taxation. thirds of the amount of rates that we are to re-

pay were levied upon people who were directly benefited, not in the working of the line, but merely in the sale of the land. How have those sellers of land acted? A list of rates was published in the Mataura Ensign in March last. On the 28th March there was a public meeting held at Gore in order to consider and to oppose the levying of this rate, or, rather, to oppose the collection of it. It was to all intents and purposes an indignation meeting. What took place? There were resolutions passed that the rate was unjust. Various speakers urged that the persons rated had been deceived in regard to the whole matter. And what was the result of the meeting? It was a very important one, and it was this: Previous to the holding of this meeting, the Agricultural Company advertised in the newspapers in regard to the sale of their land. On the 29th April the old advertisement was still renewed. On the 6th May, by looking over the file of papers, it will be seen that the old advertisement is still renewed; but there is above it, in what printers call "displayed type," the line, "Waimea Plains Railway Rate!" with a big note of admiration to it. The heading was repeated, to make it more emphatic. The advertisement reads thus:-

"The New Zealand Agricultural Company are prepared to indemnify all purchasers of land bought from them on and after 1st May, 1884, against claims for the Waimea Plains rate.—G. P. Austing, Manager, Wantwood, Gore."

Well, the immediate effect of the indignation meeting was this: The company was at once warned that in future its lands would not sell. and it took the proper and natural course of guaranteeing buyers of land against an enor-mous rate. But what does that mean? It means again, what I have already pointed out, that our action, if we are going to follow the lines of the Government, will simply relieve the Agricultural Company of its just debts incurred for advantages which have accrued to it from the opening-up of this line. Well, that advertisement remained in the paper for some short time in this very conspicuous fashion: now there is a permanent advertisement, one para-graph of which is to the same effect as this special advertisement. I think there is one other point as to this railway which I ought to deal with before I have done. We are told these railways are going to pay; that they are going to be very excellent concerns, and will yield a handsome net income after paying all expenses of working. But upon the year ending the 31st March, 1888, the income from this Waimea Plains Railway, after paying all expenses, was £964 14s. 5d. That is all they had, to pay interest upon bonds and to give profits to shareholders; and in the year ending with the 31st March, 1884, it only yielded £12 14s. 6d., after paying working expenses. And this is one of the profitable lines we are to take over This is one of the wonderful bargains which we must secure at once, or shall lose for evermore! And what is the opinion of the General Manager of Railways in reference to the paying qualities of this line? He says that, if

Colonel Trimble



managed by the Government as one of the Government lines, it might produce £2,000 a year -nothing like sufficient to pay interest on the bonds; nothing like sufficient to pay interest on the amount of the purchase-money. And yet we are asked, not only to give the original cost of making this railway to the share-holders, less wear and tear actually accrued, but also to add the back rates—for the back rates have never been paid—to the purchase-money. Well, that is all I can find out about that railway. Now I will come to another railway—the Waimate Railway—and the only information I can get about this line is quite incidental. Like all the other information I have about these lines, it is to be found in the minutes of evidence given before a Select Committee of the Legislative Council. There is no other authentic document to which we can go for information; and that is quite by the way -it is quite incidental. It is information not got by careful application with reference to the subject before us, and comes up incidentally, but therefore seems to be the more valuable, so far as it goes. Now with reference to the Waimate Plains Railway. Mr. Maxwell states that the loss on the working last year was £1,148; so that it was worth £1,148 less than nothing. Then, we come to the Duntroon Railway. The loss on working that line, according to the same gentleman-that is, the Manager of the Government railways of the colony-was £480. There, again, we have a large deficiency even on working expenses, and of course nothing whatever for either bondholders or shareholders. But there are some curious things in reference to this railway. There seems to be a very large amount of nominal capital, but there is no real capital. Now, the difference between our New Zealand milways and these private railways, and the milways at Home, seems to be this: that in New Zealand there is an attempt made to do everything with borrowed money, and nothing with the money of the shareholders; and this is one brilliant example of this kind of undertaking. At Home no railway bonds can be issued until a large proportion—a fixed proportion - of the capital of the company is paid up; and the amount of bonds that can be issued is in proportion to the amount of paidup capital. But here we allow our railway companies to issue bonds when there is no paid-up capital, or a merely nominal amount. A large shareholder in that company was asked how much per share was paid upon the shares in the company—£10 shares. He could not tell, though he was director of the company, how much was paid, but, he said, it was something like 1s. per share. One shilling out of £10! and even that, I think, was an exaggera-tion. I think only 6d. has been paid up, and for this reason: This gentleman holds thirtysix thousand pounds' worth of shares, and his paid-up capital would be £180 at 1s. a share. But the whole paid-up capital is only £370, and as there is another shareholder to a similar extent, besides others for large amounts, not over 6d. can have been paid up. And this gentle-

man, who has had the audacity to accuse the Government of having placed him in a false position because it insisted on being paid the loss on a certain quarter's working expenses and he had to give his cheque for £1,000. is one of those whom, with others, we are to relieve - gentlemen who invested their money, not for the public good, but simply for the advancement of their own private interests. That is all the information I can get about that railway. Then we come to the Rotorua Railway, and that is the last of those that I can get any information about. I have heard upon good authority that that company has a paid up capital of £57,000. It seems to be the only bona fide affair of the whole, so far as the shareholders and persons interested in getting up the companies are concerned. Well, Sir, we are asked to take over a large number of railways upon specific terms, and the whole of the information that this House can get is to be picked up in scraps such as I have stated. Unless the resolution that is before the Committee is supplemented by another resolution calling upon the Government to lay before us full information, I say that the change in it that has been made is worthless, and we shall be hoodwinked once more, as we have been this session. We shall come together without information which would enable us to discuss the matter with better light than we have on this occasion. What we ought to have before coming to a conclusion is this: We ought to know the nominal amount of capital; the amount of paid-up capital; the amount of rates levied, the amount collected, and the amount due; we ought to know who the parties are who have invested in these railways, how much the shareholders have sacrificed for the public interest, and what is the present value of the lines, irrespective of the artificial mode of computing it laid down in the original resolution. It appears to me that railways earning £1,800 or £1,400 a year less than working expenses cannot be properties of very great value. Such a line cannot be worth the amount originally paid for it plus the amount of rates unpaid. It is ridiculous to suppose such a thing, and, when we are asked next session to consider these matters, we ought to be in a position to know which should be taken and which should be left, each upon its individual merits. Any hotchpotch arrangement such as we have had this session must not be repeated. It simply works in this way: There are, say, six railways to be dealt with. Each honourable member may say, in argument for argument's sake, that five out of the six are bad, but he wants the sixth-his own-taken over; and the consequence is there is a system of log-rolling, which independent members are powerless to meet; because it does not mean these six men alone, but these six men and all their connections and all their influence. They have control over other members. I do not mean control in any mean sense, but control in the sense of being looked to for guidance upon different questions. For instance, a Government brings down

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a measure. Every individual follower of the Government could not say that he fully appreciated all the measures of the Government, and could pronounce a judgment upon all; but he has faith in the Government, and gives the Government support on some measures which he has not perhaps been able to look thoroughly into. So it is with regard to various individuals — they accept the statements of others on local matters; and those who support these railways, with those who trust to them for guidance, become a phalanx which no one can resist. Therefore I think we should have the fullest possible information with respect to each of these railways. I trust that the honourable member for Auckland East will add to the resolution the words that he read to us. If that were done, we might, when we meet again, be fairly well able to consider this question.

Mr. BEETHAM.-I have not yet spoken at any stage of this debate, but I feel it my duty -as I have said I would not show factious opposition to the Government - to state my reasons for taking up the attitude I have assumed on this question. The two parties are joined together to a certain extent now that the Government have agreed to bring any contract before Parliament for confirmation next session; and I presume this resolution will be carried, and that the Government will be in a position to make some arrangement with these district railway companies during the recess. Now, I think the honourable mem-ber for Taranaki hardly put the question cor-rectly when he said we might be hoodwinked next session when called upon to decide whether we should give assent to the arrangement made during the recess. Forewarned is forearmed, and it will be the duty of the representatives of the people when assembled next session to look very carefully into the whole of the circumstances connected with the arrangements that may be made by the Government. I was much amused with the remarks of the honourable member for Ash-burton, when he appeared to look upon the agriculturists of the South Island—those immediately connected with the district railways—as if they constituted the whole of the agriculturists of New Zealand, and said that the Ministers, in conserving their interests, are really conserving the interests of all the agriculturists of New Zealand. The Ministers have every reason to conserve the interests of these agriculturists, as far as is consistent with the general welfare; but I, as a North Island representative, hope that they will take this into consideration: that we have not up to the present time any railways made under the provisions of the District Railways Act, and that all our works hitherto undertaken are harbour works, County Council works, and so on, and we have not had any consideration shown to us at all. If, during the next session of Parliament, the House agrees to any measure of relief to the ratepayers and those connected with the district railways in the South, it will be the duty of the House to take into consideration those ratepayers in other

Colonel Trimble

parts of New Zealand who have rendered themselves responsible for loans for various other purposes in the interest of their own districts and of New Zealand generally, and consider their necessities as well. For instance, the County Council with which I have been connected for some years past raised a loan of £5,000, and, although that loan is not for the purpose of constructing a railway, but for the purpose of constructing roads and bridges, such works are fully as important to the welfare of New Zealand as the making of branch lines of railway in various parts of the colony.

An Hon. Member.—What about the Rimutaka?

Mr. BEETHAM. - That was undertaken as a trunk line, and the Wairarapa settlers had nothing to do with it. Referring to that railway, why should not those purchasers of land who were under the impression that that railway would be continued through from Masterton to Woodville have their interests considered as well as people in the South? They took up their land under the false impression that money would be spent on that extension. And I should like to point out to the Minister for Public Works that the present terminus of that railway is in a blind gully. while, if continued eight miles farther on, it would save a considerable distance in the through traffic, and would bring the railway to There is one point that a very fair centre. struck me in connection with this district-railways question. A great many people have considered the advisability of selling the railways of New Zealand to Home capitalists with the view of applying the proceeds to the reduc-tion of the public debt. Would any syndicate or body of capitalists, in such an event, be prepared to purchase our railways at the original cost of construction? Would they take that into consideration at all? Most decidedly they would do no such thing. Now, assuming that arrangements had been made under the provisions of the Bill as it passed this House, and that the railways had been purchased at the original cost of construction, and that these railways had been included in the railway system of New Zealand, would not the country, in the event of this House in its wisdom undertaking the sale of the railways, have been likely to suffer a very considerable loss by the refusal of the purchasers to purchase on the same basis? They would only take the railways at the estimated cash value at the time of sale. Next session I consider it will be our duty to watch very carefully the arrangements that may be made by the Government with these companies during the recess. If it shall be proved incontestably to us that the contracts have been fair in the interests of the inhabitants of New Zealand, and also in the interests of those railway companies and ratepayers who certainly have assisted in developing New Zealand by the construction of those lines, I shall be found only too happy to give them my assistance in carrying out the arrangement to a satisfactory issue.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE.—The Premier seems

to be in a hurry to get this question definitely settled, and I am also; but I should like it to be settled in just the opposite direction to that desired by the Premier. Seeing that there has been a sort of unholy alliance entered into between the two sides of the House, under a sort of joint-stock resolution, I do not propose to enter at any great length into the merits of the question, but will simply say that, in my opin-ion, if this resolution is passed, every honour-able member who comes to this Parliament next session will be bound to confirm the agreement which the Government undoubtedly will make with each and all of these district railway companies for the lease or purchase of those properties. That is my firm opinion, and I wish to put it on record. To my mind the Government have acted in a very unconstitutional manner, and in a way respecting which I dare not express what I think, for fear you, Sir, should call me to order for using language that is too strong. To my mind the Government have acted in a highly-improper manner in forcing this Parliament to give an unwilling anction to proposals the details of which they have carefully kept from this House. Over and over again honourable members who are not in opposition to the Government have risen in their places and asked, demanded, and requested that full and detailed information in regard to each of those companies should be given to the House before we were asked to pass either the Railways Purchasing Bill or these resolutions. And, I ask, why has not this information been given? Is there anything wicked, is there anything wrong, in the proposals of the Government, that they should secrete this information from us? It seems to me there must be something which they do not wish either the House or the public to know before they get the power to deal with those railways. A great deal has been said about the unfortunate ratepayer in reference to the rates he is subject to pay under the existing law. I maintain that the ratepayer has been made the stalking-horse by the shareholders; and it is not the relief of the ratepayers that the Colonial Treasurer is so anxious to give effect to, but the relief of the shareholders, who have got into great financial difficulties owing to their endeavours to increase the value of their own properties at the cost of the ratepayers, and now at the cost of the colony. And I ask, in all justice and fairness, what right has this House to saddle upon the ratepayers generally of the Colony of New Zealand a sum of not less than £600,000, expended for the special benefit of a few favoured localities? It seems to me highly improper, to my the least of it. We have no information. Over and over again we have requested that this information should be given, and we have not been successful in obtaining it. The honourable member for Ashburton went on to paint a very dreadful picture of the ratepayers with regard to the Rakaia - Ashburton Forks Railway. That railway was not made, I presume, without the consent of the ratepayers; and, if they agreed to purchase or lease lands knowing the responsibilities and liabilities to

which they were subject, surely it is no argument to come here and tell us they have made an extremely bad bargain, and we must remove the burden from them on to people perfectly innocent altogether. These railways are not going to be, apparently, a remunerative speculation at all. The only information that we have goes to prove that the more the railways are worked the less they will pay, and it seems to me extremely improper that we should be forced to purchase them. There is no doubt in my mind, and in the minds of most honourable gentlemen who do not view this subject from a prejudiced or personal point of view, that those railways were made for the one express purpose of increasing the value of the estates to which they were made: and, because they have not been successful, the country is now called upon to pass this resolution, which I can only stigmatize as highly improper, and detrimental to the best interests of a large portion of the people of New Zealand.

Mr. ROLLESTON .-- I wish to ask the Premier a question about the deferred-payment settlers on the Kurow-Duntroon line. information is multifarious. He knows something about everything; and no doubt he is perfectly aware of the present position of the Duntroon-Kurow Block. Will he tell the House how many deferred-payment settlers bid above the cash price put upon it by the Government, what these prices were, how they differed from the cash payment, and how they differed from the amount that was paid, before this agreement was made, for land in the imme-

diate vicinity?
Mr. STOUT.—The honourable gentleman was Minister of Lands at the time, and I hope he has a sufficient knowledge of the department to obtain the information without my aid.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Oh, yes; but I do not think the Government sitting on those benches is entitled, when asked for information on an important matter of this kind, to treat the House in that way.

An Hon. Member.—Give notice. Mr. ROLLESTON.—There is no use in doing that. I have some information about this matter. More, I know, can be got by hunting up Gazettes, and by a great deal of work. It is for the honourable gentlemen on those benches to give the House information on these subjects.

Mr. STOUT.—Give notice, and I will have it

for you to-morrow.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—To-morrow will be too late. Sections 7 and 8 went at £3 and £1 10s. respectively. That was the upset price. There was no advance upon it. Cash Sections 4, 5, and 6 were sold at £1—half the price that any quantity of land has been sold at just on the other side of the river.

Mr. STOUT.—Shingle.
Mr. ROLLESTON.—Very good land.
Mr. STOUT.—I know what it is. I have

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Section 10 brought £3; Section 11, £1 1s.—all at the upset price; and a very considerable number of sections went in the same way, until you come to Block III. We are asked to take over the Duntroon-Hakateramea Railway in the interests of the deferred-payment settlers, and it is very much a question what the interests of these people are, and whether they were induced to go to great cost in purchasing land on account of the railway. I come to Block III. I asked for information about it, but the honourable gentleman will not supply it. I am very much pleased to see that the honourable gentleman regards this side of the House as being the repository of much more accurate information than the Government themselves possess. We are continually treated as if we were the Government and they the Opposition.

Mr. DUNCAN.—Let me give the honourable gentleman, the late Minister of Lands, a little bit of advice. For the benefit of the honourable gentlemen opposite, and the honourable member for Geraldine in particular, I will tell him that these upset prices were obtained, as I call it, fraudulently, and I will state why. showed this railway right through the sections on the plan. He drew out a long advertisement, and had it inserted in the Oamaru newspapers, stating that here was this famous block of land with a railway running straight through the centre: not a word to say it was a district railway, and not one word to say that they would be taxed for the making of that railway if the rates of railway charges did not pay 7 per cent. on construction. It was pointed out that they would have a railway right to their doors. These upset prices were obtained by false pretences. That is what the honourable member for Geraldine did to these deferred-payment settlers. Some of the land is level, as flat as the floor of this House, and the soil is good; some of it is hilly; and some of it is shingle. There are not two sections of equal value. Some was bought at £10. should like to know what inducement was held out that a man would give £10 for a large section, about thirty-five miles from a market, if it was not the inducement of this railway right through it.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Only one section went

at that rate.

Mr. DUNCAN.—I am glad the honourable gentleman acknowledges that there was one, at any rate.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—It was bought by one of the promoters of this railway, Mr. Campbell,

of Otakaika.

Mr. DUNCAN.—I beg to differ from the honourable gentleman. It was another gentleman who bought the section. The honourable gentleman behaved far better to Mr. Campbell than he did to the deferred-payment settlers: he allowed him to occupy this section for a long time, and crop it, without paying any rent. At last it was put up for sale, and 30s. per acre added for improvements—to be paid to Mr. Campbell—and the Government sold it to another gentleman altogether. I have been often on the land. I could tell the honourable member for Geraldine a great deal more, but I think I have said quite sufficient, as I do not want to delay the House.

Mr. Rolleston .

Mr. BARRON.—I wish to supplement some information given to the House this afternoon in connection with these district railways. The honourable member for Akaroa gave to the House some figures which the Premier did not seem to consider were very fairly stated. My honourable friend said that the total rateable value of the district through which the Waimes Plains Railway ran was £28,469, and that the rate would yield £4,744, of which amount the Agricultural Company would pay £3,003, leaving £1,741 to be paid by 471 ratepayers. My honourable friend went on to say that 213 of those ratepayers were rated at under 20s. Well, Sir, the Premier pointed out that that was rather an unfair way of stating these figures, and that the large number of ratepayers unaccounted for ought to be referred to, and the amount of rates which they wereto pay. I have endeavoured to discover some more figures bearing on this question, and I find there are only thirty of the remaining 258-ratepayers rated at over £10. Of these, twelve pay £10 and under £15; nine pay £15 and under £20; four, £20 and under £30; two, £30 and under £40; one, £132; one, £325; and the Agricultural Company, as before stated, £3,003. So that we find that, of all these rate-payers unaccounted for by the honourable member for Akaroa, 228 are rated between £1 and £10, and there are only thirty who are rated at over £10, and that very few of these are rated at an amount they can feel to be pressing upon them very heavily. There is another circumstance in connection with the district railways, which it is well again tourge on the House, though honourable members know it. The Government has the right to purchase after seven years from the date of construction, and both local rates and Government guarantee cease in a few years. So that. if we leave the matter alone, our right to purchase and the relief of the ratepayers under the Act will very soon arise, and the proposals that the Government now asks the House to assentto are really no more favourable than the terms under the right of purchase as laid down under the Act. The ratepayers have only a few years to suffer; it has been shown that the burden is not permanent, as the Government propose to make it, and is not very great; and I submit that it would be well for the House to leave the whole matter alone—to leave the Government to enter into any such negotiations as they may think fit without any direction or approval of the House; and, if they find that any overtures are made by the companies which would place the colony in a favourable position by the purchase of these lines, then there will be no difficulty in proving this to the House, and if it is a good bargain for the country there will be no difficulty in taking advantage of it. I shall vote against the proposal, as I prefer to leave the matter entirely open as it now stands.

Mr. BUCHANAN.—I was very much astonished when I heard the Government give notice of the resolution now before the House. I donot profess to be so thoroughly well up in constitutional points as some of the honourable members who have debated the resolution from this point of view; but it appeared to me a very extraordinary proceeding on the part of the Government to attempt in this House to set aside the decision of this Parliament in such a barefaced manner. I opposed the passage of the Bill through this House, and I gave, as well as I was able, my reasons for doing so. I hold, as other honourable gentlemen have done, that it was the duty of the Government to place information before the members of this House, so as to enable them to vote for or against the Bill upon its merits. Piecemeal information has come to us from various members of this House—amongst others, from the honourable member for Akaroa; and, from the figures he gave, I must say that the position which the Colonial Treasurer has taken up with regard to this Bill seems a most extraormary one. In another place an honourable smileman was prevented from voting because he was held by the Speaker of the House to be personally and pecuniarily interested. I would ask you, Mr. Hamlin, whether the Colonial Tressurer would be in a different position from the honourable gentleman I have mentioned. I would ask whether the Colonial Treasurer, being pecuniarily interested, is any more in a position to vote than was that honourable gentleman in another place. But, to go on with my remarks, the country is called upon to pay from £600,000 to £1,000,000 for the special benefit of a section of people about whom we have got no information whatever. On behalf of my constituents, and as a representative of the colony, I enter my protest egainst this in the strongest possible manner. The Government have offered no substantial defence whatever for withholding the information in their possession. I am not in possession of such information as enables me to vote intelligently on this question. The ratepayers may be suffering very great injustice under the District Railways Act; but I want to see that it is so, before I assume the fact to be moved. It has been said by a good many honourable members in this House that the shareholders in these railways are, for the greater part, the ratepayers; but there are very two cases indeed where any ratepayers are agrieved, or where any ratepayer is paying anything he was not aware of when he voted for the bringing into force of the District Railways Act in his particular locality. Nothing has come from the Government benches to move that this is so to any great extent. We have no lists, and no definite information at all. Then, again, in the valuation they proposed to this House, no difference whatever was made, whether good judgment had been shown originally in the selection of the lines of railway -whether, in fact, the railway was or was not made in the interests of a few promoters who reaped the wages of promoters and then washed their hands of the whole thing. There was no attempt made to show that we were

member for Wairarapa North, if the colony was going to sell these railways afterwards we should be treated very differently from the way it is proposed to treat the shareholders of these district railways. The same honourable gentleman alluded to the position of the ratepayers in the district which he represents. I would go a little further and would say this: that all over the colony there are large numbers of ratepayers liable for rates under the Roads and Bridges Construction Act. When that measure was before this House it was openly stated by a great many honourable members during the debates upon it that the 75 per cent. given in aid of the construction of main roads would practically be a gift to those whose land these main roads benefited; and that, after a few years more or less, pressure would be brought to bear on the Government to remit the amounts owing by these ratepayers. The indebtedness extends, in the case of main roads, for a period of ten years, and, in the case of district roads, for a period of fifteen years; and the liability of these ratepayers now to the Government will amount to a very large sum. What are we doing, in what we propose to do in regard to the district railways? Why, we are inviting these ratepayers to follow the example which the Government sets the House. There can be no doubt about that; and honourable members must not be surprised if in a short time we find these ratepayers coming before this House and asking for relief. I have no wish whatever totake up the time of the House, but I want, upon this occasion, as on the occasion when the Bill was previously before us, to enter my protest against the proceedings of the Government. I consider that the question has been brought before honourable members in a very unfair way indeed, and that we are asked to vote upon next to no information.

Original motion negatived.

Mr. BRYCE.—I am only rising now for the purpose of asking the Premier whether he will undertake to obtain detailed information with regard to these lines and lay it before Parliament before asking it to ratify the agreements made

Mr. STOUT.—Certainly that will be done. Most certainly, I apprehend, before Parliament is asked to ratify the contract, it will have all the information that we can get.

Mr. W. D. STEWART.—May I ask the Hon. the Premier whether it is intended to merely lease the lines, or to purchase them?

Mr. STOUT.—We prefer leasing them. That is the reason we changed the word "purchase" to "acquisition."

Dr. NEWMAN.—I understood the Premier agreed to the suggestion made by the honourable member for Auckland East to insert the word "approval" for "ratification" in the motion.

who reaped the wages of promoters and then washed their hands of the whole thing. There was no attempt made to show that we were going to pay a commercial valuation for these lines. As it was well put by the honourable | Mr. STOUT.—I agreed to accept the amendment if the honourable gentleman wished to move it. I had no power to alter the resolution, except with the leave of the House; but I have no objection to the word "approval"

being inserted, if the Committee allow me to put it in.

Sir G. GREY.—A great deal of information has been given to us by the honourable member for Akaroa and the honourable member for Caversham, and by the honourable member for Taranaki, and I am satisfied in my own mind that this resolution will simply be the means of involving the colony hereafter in trouble and in difficulty. I think it wrong to shift from the shoulders of a company the payment of rates and to entail that great debt upon the whole colony. The debt which it is proposed should be incurred amounts to £1 4s. per head on every man, woman, and child in New Zea-land. It may reach £2 a head or more. The argument is that we are to relieve the ratepayers; but I find, in the case of the Waimea Estate, the New Zealand Agricultural Company undertakes to indemnify all future pur-chasers against the payment of claims for district railway rates, and the burden of this is now to be shifted from the company whose property has been made so valuable by the railway on to the people of New Zealand, who will have to be taxed to make up this amount for the company. I object to that. To me it seems perfect cruelty. Looking to distant parts of the colony, and looking to persons I know in my immediate vicinity, I find farmers who have struggled on for a great many years without any chance of having a railway, and who are just beginning to emerge into a state of independence, but not of comfort; and I think it will be cruel to burden them with a payment of this kind without their being consulted. I think, as the company chose to indemnify these people against these railway rates, and to put forward this advertisement as an inducement to them to purchase, we have no right to attack the rest of the population to make the matter good; and I will therefore move no amendment, and in no way recognize the transaction.

The Committee divided.

#### AYES, 49.

Atkinson Harper Ross Ballance Hatch Samuel Beetham Hirst, H. Seddon Bevan Hobbs Shephard B.-Bradshaw Holmes Smith Steward, W. J. Stewart, W. D. Brown Joyce Bruce Lance Buckland, J. C. Larnach Stout Cadman Locke Sutter Cowan Mackenzie, M. Tole Dargaville McMillan Turnbull Duncan Moat Vogel Fergus O'Callaghan Whyte, J. B. Fitzherbert O'Conor Fraser Ormond Tellers. Grigg Pyke McKenzie, J.

Noes, 24.

Richardson, E. Walker.

Allwright Buckland, W.F. Fulton
Barron Conolly Grey
Bryce Dodson Hakuene

Mr. Stout

Guinness

Lake Reese
Menteath Rolleston
Montgomery Russell
Moss Shrimski
Newman Te Ao
Pearson

Thompson, T.
Thomson, J. W.
Tellers.
Buchanan
Trimble.

PAIRS.

For. Against.
Coster Johnston
Garrick Macarthur
Gore Hurst, W. J.
Macandrew Hursthouse
Morris. Gillies.

Majority for, 25.

Resolution agreed to, reported to the House and read a second time.

On the question, That the resolution agreed to,

Mr. WAKEFIELD said, - Sir, seven honourable gentlemen, in the course of the debate which has taken place in Committee have expressed their individual views of what the effect of this resolution is, and I thin that they have taken a course which was convenient to themselves certainly, and which may be very useful next session; but I have delayed until this period in taking that course I may say that my view of the resolution distinctly is that it binds this House to nothing whatever, but that it simply conveys exactly what the words themselves express; and I had that it will behave the Government, in any dealings they may have with these companies, to bear in mind that the Parliament will be absolutely free next session to deal with the subject precisely as it may seem fit to them when the have the agreement and the whole informs tion before them. I think that the House had come to the decision it has to-night mainly because there was not time during the present session to give to the subject the consideration it demanded without preventing it being deals with at all this session. The Colonial Treesurer has assured the House that it was a matter of the most urgent importance that this subject should be dealt with this sessionthat it should not be allowed to stand over the recess in an unsettled condition—and on that assurance, I take it, the Committee of the Whole has agreed to the resolution. But for that assurance, and for the very late period of the session at which the proposal has been because to see the proposal table. brought forward, I take it the House would not have consented to take any step what ever with regard to this question until it had before it every possible piece of information required to throw light upon the subject. In other words, the House would probably have referred the matter to a Select Committee, to gather all the information that could be gathered. I understand it is the feeling of the House that something should be done with a view to legislation next session, because there was no time, at this period of the session, to investigate the matter in that exhaustive manner we could wish. We have therefore allowed it to stand over till next session, and what we have placed on the Government the

responsibility of doing is to prepare arrangements with the companies, and to present those arrangements for ratification next year. The Premier has, I am glad to say, given an ex-plicit assurance to the House that next year full information will be laid before Parliament. That is an assurance I was very glad to hear him give, and I have every confidence that it will be literally and completely fulfilled. But, If the Government should not give us that in-femation, I hold that we shall still be entirely hee to get it for ourselves; and I have no doubt has the House, after the experience of this ssion, will not allow any step of any kind to taken in regard to these railways next year matil the matter has been probed to the bottom; and I presume that the probable course next par will be to refer the agreements to a Committee, to inquire into the whole matter. One mason why I think the House may regard the assolution, which has been carried by a large mignity, without apprehension, is that it will gre to the country and to honourable members time to inquire into the whole matter, and to remilate the whole subject of the proposed purhase of the district railways. I have no despit that during the few months which will dame between this time and the next meeting of Parliament this will form a subject of Edic inquiry and popular comment through-set the whole of New Zealand, and, from one source or another, all the material facts with regard to the financial condition and commercial value of these railways will be brought ou and published in the newspapers, and on the hustings, when honourable gentlemen go to the hustings are the hustings. becourable gentlemen will be able to elicit, has never been elicited before-namely, \* general expression of public opinion on the bole subject—so that we shall be in a much better condition next year to deal with the question than we have been this session. Then, if the Government be able, as the Premier has sured us it will be able, to lay before us agreebents equitable as between the companies and the colony, this House no doubt, having the internation it requires, will be able to come to \* satisfactory conclusion. But, if the reverse would be the case, and those arrangements, when laid before us, should show that the solony is being wronged, and that it is proposed to give undue advantages to these com-Panies or to any persons connected with them, then I hold that this House will be quite at berty, in all honour, to refuse to ratify those strangements, and to leave the question of the purchase of the district railways exactly in the position in which it is at present. That a the view I take of the resolution, and it is because I take that view that I do not feel alled upon to oppose it at this stage. I hope every member of the House will form his own indement upon it, and that we shall not consider ourselves bound by the opinions of one or who tell us they consider this resolution proves the purchase of the railways on any terms that the Government may think fit. The Government have taken a grave responsibility

on themselves, and, if they acquit themselves in a public-spirited way in regard to that responsibility, they will gain credit to themselves for having used the authority intrusted to them by the House in a wise and proper manner. But, if it should be the contrary, and there is any indication of wrong-doing, which we have no right to assume will be the case, then the Government will have to bear the blame, and no responsibility will in any way rest upon this House.

Mr. MOSS.—I cannot take the same view of what has been done as that taken by the honourable member for Selwyn. If I had taken it I certainly should have voted with the Government on this occasion; but I voted: against them because I consider that we have virtually, to-night, purchased these railways. We may differ in regard to the terms, but, in asking the Government to come to the best arrangement they can with a view to the acquisition of these lines, we have certainly come to the conclusion that it is to the interest of the country that we should acquirethem. Of course we shall be at liberty, when the House meets again, to question the terms upon which the Government may have agreed; but I think the vote to which we have just come has practically settled the question. 1 do not see how the House can possibly reopen it, so far as the acquisition of these lines is concerned. That is the view of the question which I take, and I state it because, undoubtedly, if I had thought it was to remain a perfectly open question, I should have been disposed to vote with the Government on this occasion. But I could not so regard the vote, and therefore divided against them.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—I was going to ask the Government whether they propose to submit a similar resolution to the other branch of the Legislature.

Mr. STOUT.-No.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—No, I understand not.

Mr. STOUT.—I think this is an unheard-of question. I am not aware what right the honourable gentleman has to ask a question of the Government as to what their future action is to be.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Of course the honourable gentleman is quite entitled not to answer it. If a similar resolution is not brought before the other branch of the Legislature a very great constitutional wrong will be done.

Mr. STOUT.—No.

Mr. ROLLESTON. — I think so. We arecoming to a resolution to set aside the decision of the other branch of the Legislature. By the resolution brought down to this House we are to suspend legislative action, and that, I submit, is a most unconstitutional position totake up. We are not only to make the decision of this branch of the Legislature go against the decision that has been come to in the other branch, but we are to say, by mere resolution of one House, that we will stoplevying the rates—stop payment of the rates, and suspend the operation of an Act of the Legislature; and I hold that is a course that

ought not to be taken. Now we are told that it is not a question of purchasing the railways, but of leasing—that the Government in-tend to give effect to their original intention as to leasing the railways. It appears to me that the decision this House has come to will be regretted in future by the House - that it will be criticised very strongly, not only in New Zealand but out of New Zealand, as a most improper procedure. As an old member of this House, I have watched this proceeding with very great pain, because I believe we are creating a very bad precedent, and going against all constitutional propriety. I have raised my voice, and have done my best to prevent this wrong being done, and I can do no more.

District Railways.

Sir G. GREY.—I wish to say that I differ from some of the views I have heard expressed to-night in reference to the result of what we are doing. My belief is that of those gentlemen who state that we are about really to entail on the House the necessity of purchasing these railways. I believe that must be the necessary result of the resolution that has been passed; or, at all events, it will be a miracle if we escape from such a catastrophe. I bcg the House to recollect that, in spite of the efforts of many members, the Bill was passed through this House, and it went to another Chamber, and that other Chamber rejected it. confess that I felt a gladness I can hardly describe in believing that a power had arisen which could save the poor of this country from additional taxation of the most objectionable kind; and I was in hope the danger would be escaped, at all events for this session. forget that, where the wealthy make a loss, it will upon all occasions fall upon the poor to pay for that loss; and that is what has been done in this instance. Certain gentlemen in this country, to improve their property, to give a value to their lands, formed themselves into companies. With that object they constructed these railways, and a heavy loss has been entailed upon them for the railways; yet they have greatly increased the value of their properties. It is admitted that, in two of the -cases, they cannot pay interest on the public money they have borrowed from this colony to construct these railways—that the Insurance Fund has, in that respect, been endangered. We were told that they could not pay the interest upon the money borrowed from the Government Insurance Department of the colony, the funds of which were deposited to afford the means of paying the policies of insurance when they became due—when they fell in, in fact. A great loss has been made by the rich in making these railways, and a Bill was forced through this House to indemnify them by compelling every man, woman, and child in the colony to contribute to pay the losses they had incurred. Honourable gentlemen will see that, that being the case, the payment falls upon the poor. The rich will pay through Customs duties no more than the poor will pay. The rich are determined to save themselves by compelling the poor to pay the money which is to indemnify those

gentlemen who speculated to improve their own property. It proves that one great eviexists—two evils, I may say. There is the evil of Death, because Death dogs us all from the cradle to the grave — the great hunter a last strikes us all, the mighty and the humbl alike; but the poor have this additional but den laid upon them in life: that the paymen of the losses of the rich—losses which the cannot escape—dogs them from the cradle t Every week, every month, ever the grave. year of their lives, at each meal, wheneve they sit over their fire, they are rendered les comfortable by their having to contribute t the payment of this debt. I cannot feel other wise than sorrowful that Parliament should len itself to an act of this kind, which must brin

misery on the poor.
Sir J. VOGEL.—It is necessary for me t say a few words on the question of the under standing that exists concerning this resolution The honourable member for Selwyn spoke; h gave us a sort of lecture; he endeavoured timpress upon us what the House regarded a the meaning of the resolution—what the Hous could do next session. He indulged very freel in the use of the words "we" and "us. I am not aware what right the honourable gentleman has to use these words. I am no aware that he speaks for any single humar creature but himself, or that he has the right to do so. I presume he uses them more in an editorial sense than as a member of this House. I would say to him that I do not understand that the Government have any understanding whatever with him on this sub We look upon the honourable membe for Egmont as the leader of the Opposition and we have an understanding with him on the subject, which I do not think is likely to b misunderstood. In order that there may b no misunderstanding on this subject, I will say this: When the question was brought down this afternoon the understanding the Govern ment came to with the leader of the Opposition was this: that, the question in one aspec having been disposed of, and not requiring to be dealt with this session, the Governmen was asked by the House to make arrange ments for acquiring the railways during the recess upon the best terms they could, subject to the ratification of the House, the under standing being that the Government were t use their utmost efforts to obtain the mos favourable terms, and the responsibility bein thrown upon the Government of securing suc terms as in their belief will be acceptable t both Houses of Parliament next session. The responsibility rests with the Government-th responsibility of making such arrangements to the best of their belief will be acceptable ! both Houses. They will do so on their own responsibility, and in the belief or certaint that the arrangements they make are such a would command the support of the majority o both Houses. I think the honourable member for Egmont will admit that I have correct! described what was the understanding thi afternoon. As regards the constitutional ques

tion which the honourable member for Geraldine has raised, the foundation of the debate was that there was no constitutional question to be dealt with, because we were bringing down the question in a different aspect. Had there been a constitutional question to be argued, there would have been a great deal to The Bill was thrown out in the be said. Upper House on the ground that it was a money Bill. We contended that it was not a money Bill. If it was a money Bill, it is very clear the Upper House had not the right to throw it out. The precedents are very clear that the Upper House have not the right to throw out money Bills. That is established by a distinct resolution of the House of Commons. Supposing it was not a money Bill, the Upper House had the indubitable right to throw it out. The Upper House cannot view this resolution as an attack upon its privileges. Although we affirm that action is to be taken during the recess, but not necessarily upon the lines of the Bill that has been rejected, such action is to be subject to the approval of both Houses. There is nothing in this resolution conflicting with the privileges of the Upper Chamber. Sir, it takes two to make a quarrel, and we do not want to quarrel with the Upper House. What I am about to say will be rather amusing to honourable members. We will suppose there are three honourable gentlemen in this House who have one desire clear to their minds, and that is, to cast about for some excuse to carry a hostile vote against the Government. In pursuit of that object they are not very nice as to the subject or the question, so long as it turns against the Government. vernment, in the exercise of their discretion, and thinking it necessary that the subject should be dealt with during the recess, put a notice on the Paper in the shape of a resolution. Now, we will suppose that this triumvirate of whom we are speaking have in the Upper Chamber a triumvirate also—a sort of shadow of the other—and we have them constantly conferring and considering how their joint object can be attained—that is, how the tripping-up of the Government is most likely to be secured. They say to each other, "There! the Government have done it now; they have put this resolution on the Paper; they are going to enter into a fight with the Upper House. The Government dare not go to the country upon such a question—they dare not face the result." "Now, mind what you do, say the three gentlemen in the Lower House; "don't you give the Government any excuse or cause to complain of the conduct of the Upper House; don't give them a shadow of ground to say that the Upper House is opposed to the policy of the Government; let everything the Government propose go through as easily as possible; let us fight them on the question of the district railways alone." These six gentlemen have helped us to a most happy result. They have managed to open for us a pathway of a most flowery and desirable description. Our policy measures have gone through as easily as possible. The three gentlemen in

District Railways.

the Council have assisted to pass the Government measures there, so as to give no excuse for the supposition that they were hostile to the Government; otherwise it is possible that those three gentlemen would have given us a great deal of trouble. But, instead of that, as I have said, the Upper House has been most agreeable, most kind; everything there has passed with the greatest amount of ease. When it came, however, to considering this resolution, the three gentlemen are dismayed that there is nothing to fight about in the shape we have brought it on. The leader of the Opposition was satisfied, the resolution was discussed in the most amicable manner, an agreement was arrived at, and the business of the session has really progressed in a manner which we could not have anticipated ten days ago; and we are able now to join, with the six honourable gentlemen to whom I have referred, not only in admiring the conduct of the Upper House, but in agreeing that it is a most valuable part of the Constitution. I do not propose to say any more in reference to the resolu-tions, except that we shall do our utmost to discharge faithfully the responsibility which the House has put upon us.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I should like to say a word in personal explanation. The honourable gentleman has thought fit to misrepresent what I said when addressing the House just now. What I said was that, following the course pursued by several other honourable members, I desired to place on record my view, as an individual member, upon the resolutions which were carried in Committee. I never affected in any way to speak for any other member of the House than myself, and if I used the word "we" I used it as every member of this House uses the word when speaking of the House collectively having passed or otherwise dealt with resolutions or any other business. I wish to make this further remark: that, if the honourable gentleman continues to make allusions to me in my private capacity or to my private affairs, he will find that he has placed himself in an exceedingly unfortunate position, because that is a thing which we will not permit him-

Mr. STOUT.—"We."

Mr. WAKEFIELD.-Yes; other members of the House, and I, will not permit the honourable gentleman to refer to the private affairs and reputations of members because they happen not to please him when they are perform-ing their duty and exercising their rights as members of the House. I therefore warn the honourable gentleman that, if-

Mr. SPEAKER. — I think the honourable member is exceeding the bounds of personal explanation, and getting into a personal attack.

Mr. WAKEFIELD .- Perhaps you, Sir, did not hear the extremely personal nature of the allusion which the honourable gentleman made. What I wish to say is, that I have carefully abstained from making any personal allusions whatever in debate, and I think he might extend the same courtesy to me. However, if he persists in making these constant personal

allusions to me-

W. J. W.D. n, T.

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Mr. SPEAKER.—I cannot allow the honourable gentleman to proceed, unless he adheres to personal explanation. I gather that what he is now saying is somewhat of the nature of a threat

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—It is far from my desire to make a threat; but the honourable gentleman has placed me in a most painful position, and I want him to understand that, if he persists in such conduct—

Mr. SPEAKER. — I think the honourable gentleman is really exceeding the privilege of personal explanation which he claimed, and which I was willing to extend to him; but he must not take advantage of it to make an attack upon another honourable member.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I submit most respectfully to your ruling. I had no intention whatever of reflecting upon any other honourable member. I only desired to protect myself from what I thought the exceedingly unwise and unfair course which the honourable member had adopted of constantly making offensive personal allusions to my private affairs, and I wished to point out that it placed me in an exceedingly painful position, and that relations between the honourable gentleman and myself would be rendered extremely embarrassing should he persist in a course so unusual and

so unparliamentary. Sir J. VOGEL.—Whilst accepting the assurance of the honourable gentleman that he was speaking simply for himself, and not in a representative character, I must say that every allusion in his speech was calculated to give the impression that he spoke not merely on behalf of himself, but also for other honourable members. With regard to the honourable member's threat, I am willing to have it out with the honourable gentleman at any time I have during the greater part of my life been connected with the Press, I have been a journalist in all positions, and I know very well the privileges to which its members are entitled; but I am sure it would not be tolerated by the great family of the Press that any one should come into this House, mix with members as one of themselves, and at the

same time use his position in the Press—— Mr. SPEAKER.—This is quite out of order, and I cannot permit the honourable gentleman to proceed.

Resolution agreed to.

# BEET-ROOT SUGAR BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 2.—Bonus of 1d. per pound to be paid for first 1,000 tons of sugar.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

AYES, 59.

Atkinson B.-Bradshaw Dargaville Ballance Brown Duncan Barron Buckland, J. C. Fergus Beethain Cadman Fraser Bevan Fulton Cowan

Mr. Wakefield

Steward, W. J.
Stewart, W. D.
Stout
Thompson, T.
Thomson, J. W.
Tole
Turnbull
Vogel
Wakefield
E. Walker
White, W.
Whyte, J. B.
Tellers.
Buckland, W. P.
Fitzherbert.

Allwright Bryce Buchanan Grigg

Noes, 11. Menteath Sutter. Tellers. Richardson, G. Hursthouse Rolleston Ross Trimble.

PAIRS.

For. Against. Gore Hurst, W. J. Macandrew. Macarthur.

Majority for, 48.

Clause retained. Clause 3. — Excise duty always to be one halfpenny less than import duty.

Mr. LAKE moved, That the words "fifteen years" be struck out, for the purpose of insert-

ing "seven years."

The Committee divided on the question, "That the words be retained."

AYES, 42.

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Ballance	Joyce	Seddon
Bevan	Lance	Shrimski
Brown	Larnach	Steward, W. J.
Buckland, W.F.	. Levestam	Stout
Cadman	McKenzie, J.	Sutter
Cowan	Moat	Tole
Duncan	Montgomery	Turnbull
Fitzherbert	O'Callaghan	Vogel
Fraser	Ormond	Walker
Gillies	Pearson	White, W.
Guinness	Pyke	Whyte, J. B.
Hatch	Reese	Tellers.
Hobbs	Richardson, E.	Locke
Holmes	Russell	Moss.

dolmes Russell Johnston Noes, 16. Buchanan Menteath Trimble

Conolly Newman Wilson. Grigg Rolleston Hirst, H. Ross Tellers. Lake Thompson, T. Barron Mackenzie, M. Thomson, J.W. Buckland, J.C.

PAIRS.

For. Against. Hurst, W. J. Gore Macandrew. Macarthur. Majority for, 26.

Amendment negatived.

Clause 4.—If import duty reduced or removed, bonus to be paid in equivalent.

The Committee divided on the question,

"That the clause stand part of the Bill."

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	Aves,			hyte, J. B.	Dargaville	
Ballance	Hobbs	Seddon	l w	ilson.	Larnach.	
Bevan	Holmes	Shrimski		Majority ago	inst, 4.	•
Brown Buckland, W.1	Joyce	Stout Tole		ment negatived.		
Cadman	Larnach	Turnbull		4.—Boards to be	elected for new	dis-
Cowan	Levestam	Vogel	tricts.	TATALECE	the emission of	41h.a.
Fitzherbert	Moat	Walker	Word "W	TIVINE SS HOVED	the omission of purpose of insert	ine.
Fraser	O'Callagha	n Whyte, J. B.	" Hokitik	estand, for the	purpose of meer	ıııR
Gillies	Pearson	Tellers.			d on the questi	ion.
Guinness	Reese	Duncan	"That th	e word 'Westlan	d' be retained."	,
Hatch		n, E. McKenzie, J.		Aves, 1	•	
	Noes,	21.	Allwright			m
Barron	Montgome		Rallanca			1.
Buchanan	Moss	Thomson, J. W	Dodson	Ross		
Conolly	. Newman	Trimble Wilson.	Joyce	Shrimski	Tellers.	
Grigg Hirst, H.	Rolleston Ross	Tellers.	Lance	Stout	Bevan	
Lake	Russell	Buckland, J. C.	Macarthu	ır Sutter	Seddon.	
		V. J. White, W.		Noes, 1	2.	
Menteath	•		Fergus	Hobbs	Trimble.	
	PAIRS		Fitzherbe		Tellers.	
Fo	<b>r</b> .	Against.	Hakuene		Guinness .	
Coster		Johnston	Hatch_		ı, G. Menteath.	
Gore	3	Hurst, W. J.	Hirst, H.			
Macan		Macarthur.	ı	For.		
	Majority fo	or, 11.	Cox	wan	Against. Bruce	
Clause reta				rgaville	Whyte, J. B.	
Bill reporte	d.			aser	Thomson, J. W.	
WERMI AN	ID EDITON	TION DISTRICT	Ho	lmes	Samuel .	
	UBDIVISIO			rnach	Wilson	
ь	IN COMMIT			ntgomery	Newman	
Clause 1				Conor	BBradshaw	
Mr. GUINI	NESS moved	the insertion of the		acock arson	Buckland, J. C. Hursthouse	
words "1883 Repeal Act" after the words			3	ese	Rolleston	
"Subdivision				ephard	Moat	
The Commi	ittee divided.	•		iith	Grey, Sir G.	
•	AYES,	Ļ1. ,		wart, W. D.	Taiaroa	
Fitzherbert	Lake	Trimble.		rnbull	Buckland, W. F.	•
Hakuene	Menteath	Tellers.	) WE	alker.	Mackenzie, M.	
Hatch	Moss	Guinness	1	. Majority fo	or, 4.	
Hirst, H.	Pere	Hobbs.		ment negatived.	3 551 4	
	Noes, 1	lő.		ENTEATH move	d, That progress	₽Đ
Ballance	O'Callagha	n Thompson, T.	reported.	mmittee divided.		
Dodson	Ross	White, W.	11000	•		
Joyce	Shrimski	Tellers.	1	AYES, 1		
Lance	Stout	Bevan	Fitzherbe		Trimble.	
Macarthur. McKenzie, J.	Sutter	Seddon.	Guinness		Tellers.	
aunenzie, J.	_		Hakuene Hatch		Fergus 1, G. Menteath.	
	PAIRS		Hirst, H.		, 0. 1.2011000111	
For BBra	Jaha-	Against.		Noes, 1	16.	•
Bruce	(191192-M	O'Conor Cowan	Ballance	Macarthur		Γ.
	nd, J. C.	Peacock	Bevan	McKenzie,		
	nd, W. F.	Turnbull	Dodson	O'Callagha		
. Grey		Smith	Joyce	Ross	Tellers	
Hursth		Pearson	Lake	Stout	Seddon	
	ızie, M.	Walker	Lance	Sutter	Shrimski	
Moat	_	Shephard	1	PAIRS		
Newma Rollest		Montgomery	J . B	ForBradshaw	Against. O'Conor	
	on on, J. W.	Recse Fraser	4 –	-Bradsnaw uce	Cowan	
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Taiaros		Stewart, W. D.		ickland, W. F.	Turnb	
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Smith Grey Hursthouse Pearson Mackenzie, M. Walker Shephard Moat Newman Montgomery Rolleston Reese Thomson, J. W. Fraser Samuel Holmes Stewart, W. D. Taiaroa Whyte, J. B. Dargaville Wilson. Larnach.

# Majority against, 4.

Motion negatived.

Clause 7.—Commissioner to be appointed to ascertain debts, &c., of original Board.

Mr. GUINNESS moved, That the word "ascertain," in subsection (1), be erased.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the word be retained."

#### AYES, 17.

McKenzie, J. Thompson, T. Ballance Dodson O'Callaghan Trimble White, W. Joyce Ross Shrimski Tellers. Lake Tance Stout Bevan Seddon. Macarthur Sutter

# NoEs, 4.

Hobbs Walker. Tellers. Guinness Richardson, G.

#### PAIRS.

Against. For. Bruce Cowan Whyte, J. B. Dargaville Thomson, J. W. Fraser Holmes SamuelWilson Larnach Montgomery Newman B.-Bradshaw O'Conor Buckland, J. C. Peacock Hursthouse Pearson Reese Rolleston Shephard Moat Grey Smith Taiaroa Stewart, W. D. Buckland, W. F. Turnbull.

Majority for, 13.

Amendment negatived. Bill reported.

The House adjourned at fifteen minutes past two o'clock a.m.

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, 31st October, 1884.

Second Reading — Third Readings — Government Business—Index of Statutes—Drainage of Mines Bill—Government Insurance Association Bill—Hokitika Steam-Tug Bill—Land Bill—Life Assurance Policies Bill—West Coast Settlement Reserves Bill — Wanganui Harbour Board Empowering Bill.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

#### SECOND READING. Electric Lines Bill.

#### THIRD READINGS.

Supreme Court Registrar (Taranaki) Empowering Bill, Bankruptcy Bill, Police Offences Bill, Public Works Bill, False Notice of Birth, Marriage, and Death Bill.

#### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY moved, without notice, That the Standing Orders be so far suspended for the remainder of the session as to enable the Government Bills to take precedence, and pass through all stages in one day. He proposed that this should take

effect after the following day. The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE said it was usual, just at the very extreme end of the session, to pass a resolution of this character, and he did not know that he should take exception to it on this occasion; but he thought it right to call the attention of the Council to the grounds on which exception might be taken to it, and where he thought exception to a very great extent ought to be taken. Every person who had had the honour of being a member of Parliament for any length of time must be aware that, through the suspension of the Standing Orders in this manner, business was not duly considered, and Acts were passed in a shape they would not have been in had they been properly considered. Great and important amendments were sometimes made in Bills without receiving the attention that it was desirable Parliament should give them. His attention had been called to this question more especially at a sitting of the Trust Funds Committee; and he might refer to the circumstances at some length, as they might serve as a warning to the Council. On the serve as a warning to the Council. 17th of December, 1879, when more than half of the members of Parliament had gone home, a message from the Governor was received by the other branch of the Legislature, at its evening sitting, suggesting that an amendment should be made in the District Railways Bill, authorizing the Government to guarantee debentures to the extent of £60,000. He was not saying whether that was right or not; but the measure, judging by the course of the debate, seemed to have taken the House of Assembly by surprise, and there was a warm and exciting discussion upon the subject. The debate was continued the following morning. The business in the Council had been pretty well disposed of, there was nothing to engage its attention during the morning, and consequently it did not sit until the evening, when it was expected to wind up the legislation of the other House, pass the Appropriation Bill, and deal with a few other matters. When the Bill came on only a small minority of members, sufficient to enable the House to be kept up, were in Wellington; and when it came to the Council there were only three Middle Island members present, and none of them were at all interested in it, while the North Island members were not acquainted with the circumstances.

The result was that this very important amendment was made without being considered as it ought to have been. Members were not aware that there was any intention of introducing an amendment of the kind; members were unaware of its existence; and the provision came to his knowledge, as a member of the Committee, altogether by surprise. Now, this important alteration was carried, at the last moment of the session, through the suspension of the Standing Orders in the way they had been accustomed to tolerate. He was by no means certain that the plan was a good one, and was inclined to think they were not doing their duty by suspending the Standing Orders. As the practice had been observed for some years, he would not oppose the present motion, but he would give distinct notice that, if he had the honour to be a member of the Council during another session, he should feel it his duty to oppose such a resolution. It appeared to him that, in suspending the Standing Orders in the manner they had been in the habit of doing for many years, they were neglecting their duty to the country.

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN thought the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse had scarcely placed the matter in a fair light, and his remarks only proved how honourable members neglected their duties by going away before the end of the session. He was opposed to important measures being passed in too precipitate a manner merely because honourable members wanted to go home, but he thought there was no reasonable ground for opposing the motion, which was simply in accordance with the practice of Legislatures all over the world. All that was necessary was that honourable members should do their duty when the measures were brought forward, for he was sure they could judge of them as well at

one sitting as at several.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN thought that the motion might come on a little later, and would suggest that, if it were left over till Monday, they would be able to see then what progress the session was making.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY explained that he did not mean to take advantage of the motion before Monday, and it would save time to have the motion carried at once.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND thought the motion in its full extent was superfluous. There would never be any doubt of obtaining leave on any particular occasion, unless the subject was one of such great consequence that the Council really required time to consider it. demand contained in the motion appeared to him to be a large one, and, if the custom was ordinary, still it was a custom which he thought would be "more honoured in the breach than the observance." It would be well, he thought, that the Council should not pledge itself beforehand to give away all opportunity of full discussion, though, for his part, he would never make any difficulty in the way of grant-ing authority for the suspension of Standing Orders in reference to any particular Bill that might need it.

The Hon. Mr. ACLAND desired to say that

he thought the Council was taken by surprise. as the motion was entirely different from the one that appeared on the Order Paper. He hoped the members of the Government would allow the motion to pass in the form of which

notice had been given.

The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE did not think that the motion was one which they had any right to resist. It was quite usual that it should be carried about a week before prorogation, and it was one that was not at all unreasonable. As to the observations of the Hon. Mr. Waterbouse, it lay to a large extent with the Council, and to a large extent with the Government, how far such things could be smuggled through. In 1879 the Government sent in a Bill after most honourable members had gone, and, when the Council was continuing the discussion, they were informed that the Government would adjourn the prorogation if the discussion was continued after half-past two o'clock. If members went away and neglected their duties, they must take the responsibility of so doing; and the Government must also be held responsible for the course it took. He hoped such things would never occur again; but he did not think that, because the Government on a certain occasion had abused this power, the Council should, on that account, refuse the Government the facilities asked for.

The Hon. Mr. OLIVER was of opinion that the incident which occurred in 1879, and to which reference had been made, scarcely bore the character which the honourable gentleman supposed. It was not a surprise to the majority of the members of the House of Representatives when that proposal was made to permit the Government to guarantee sixty thousand pounds' worth of district railway debentures. Another proposal had been before the House, and had been discussed pretty largely in a clause of the Public Works Act of that year, and those who had most strenuously opposed that clause had compromised matters with the Government. The proposal was not, indeed, any surprise at all, and the honourable gentleman had entirely mistaken the character of it.

Motion agreed to.

#### INDEX OF STATUTES.

On the motion of the Hon. Dr. POLLEN, it was ordered, That the Hon. the Speaker be requested to cause the Index of Statutes, 1840-1879, to be revised and reprinted, showing all additional statutes up to the end of this session.

DRAINAGE OF MINES BILL.
The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY, in moving the motion standing in his name, said this Bill had very nearly received its quietus, in consequence of a motion to report progress without asking leave to sit again having been carried by a majority of one when the Bill was in Com-He was sure that the honourable mittee. gentleman who moved the motion would, with that spirit of fair-play which always characterized the Council, allow the matter to be discussed when there was a larger number of members present than when the motion had been carried.

Motion made, and question proposed, "That this Council will, on next sitting-day, resolve itself into a Committee further to consider the Drainage of Mines Bill."—(Hon. Mr. P. A.

Buckley.)
The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN regretted exceedingly that the Standing Orders had not been observed in this case, as, if they had been, the Bill, as one affecting waste lands, would have been sent to a Committee, and honourable members would have been then put in possession of all the facts and circumstances of the case. Great inconvenience had resulted from the non-observance of the rule, as honourable members were not now acquainted with the merits of the case.

The Hon. the SPEAKER said he thought it was probable he had made an omission in not referring the Bill to a Committee, in accordance with Standing Order 167. That Order, however, was not very explicit; but, though it did not refer to mines and to drainage of mines, still perhaps it would have been better had the

Bill been referred to the Committee.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN said a very distinguished statesman in England, of very large parliamentary experience, had a very peculiar standard by which he measured parliamentary support. The test of the sincerity of his followers was not that they should support him when he was right, but that they should stand by him as one man when he was wrong. Measured by that standard, he thought that the conduct of the honourable gentlemen on the Government benches towards a distinguished member in another place who was interested in this Bill had been such that they should be now quite satisfied to accept the decision which had been given. He thought that, having so far discharged their party duty to a member of their party, they might very well retire now upon their laurels, and allow the Council in the most polite manner to negative this motion. He was so unwilling to ask the Council to show their feelings as to the situation with respect to this Bill that he did not desire to move, as an amendment, That the Bill be ordered to be further considered in Committee that day six months; but, after the hint that had been given the previous evening as to the temper of the Council on the subject, he hoped the honourable gentleman would be now satisfied to take the decision on the voices, and not press the motion to a division.

The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE hoped the honourable gentleman would not allow his judgment to be carried away by a feeling that the question before them was influenced by any particular person.—("Oh!")—There was such a thing, no doubt, as a Bill having a prejudicial brand-mark, but a day might come when the honourable gentleman who said "Oh!" might have a Bill hounded out of the Council because of being identified with a particular name. That was a sort of argument which cut two ways. He had reason to believe

that this was a Bill defensible on its merits. and the hint given the previous evening was not a very emphatic one, the majority against the Bill being only one. He thought the Hon. the Colonial Secretary was, therefore, only acting rightly in seeking an opportunity to get further consideration for a measure on which the Council seemed to be pretty evenly divided, and as to which the honourable gentleman had probably obtained further information and arguments. He hoped the Hon. Dr. Pollen would not obstruct the measure on the ground he had stated, as he had heard the honourable gentleman on many occasions urge that time should be given to enable all infor-mation on a subject to be brought forward before a final decision was come to. He thought the Council might be reasonably asked to give further consideration to a measure on which its opinion was pretty evenly divided, but a measure which he believed to be both reasonable and just.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN thought that, if the Hon. Sir G. S. Whitmore had been present the previous evening, he would be of a different opinion. What he (Mr. McLean) complained of was that, by a trick, support had been got to serving a private object by this Bill. He had been inclined to support the Bill, but he did not think the Council should be played with in any way. When this Bill was before the Gold Fields Committee of the other House, the provision to which he referred was almost unanimously rejected, only one voting for it. The honourable gentleman who had proposed the amendment on the previous evening had the manliness to stand up, and admit that he was wrong, after having found that he had been himself deceived. The Bill was not a necessary one, and it would be a wholesome lesson given by the Council if it was laid aside, after the attempt made to cause them to serve a particular object in an indirect manner. That was the sole reason why he had voted to reject the Bill, and he should again vote the serve way for the seme reason.

vote the same way, for the same reason.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY said, in reply to the Hon. Mr. McLean's remarks as to a trick, that he had information that it was not a trick. He would be the last in the world to be a party to playing a trick on the Council or on any one else. The Hon. Mr. McLean had made himself acquainted with one side of the case, and had given the Council the benefit of his opinion, as he did on every subject. But he could assure the honourable gentleman that the information supplied to him (Mr. Buckley) was of the very opposite character, and showed that there was a necessity for the Bill, not to avoid litigation, but in the interests of fair-play and justice.—("No.")
— His honourable friend might say "No." He (Mr. Buckley) knew nothing of the merits. of the matter beyond the reasonable inquiries. he made with regard to any Bill which came before the Council. If he thought the Bill was to serve any improper purpose he should nomore move in the matter than his honourable friend Mr. McLean would. He had under-

Hon. Mr. P. A. Buckley

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stood that the amendment introduced by the Hon. Captain Fraser took the sting out of that portion of the Bill. He had been very glad to hear the statement made by the Hon. Captain Fraser; but he thought there was sufficient reason to allow the Bill to pass. If he thought there was anything improper in the Bill he should drop it, but he was assured that it was necessary to prevent injustice and unfairness.

The Council divided on the question, "That

the motion be agreed to."

#### AYES, 18.

Acland	Fraser	Reeves
Baillie	Henderson	Reynolds
Brett	Lahmann	Scotland
Buckley, G.	Martin	Whitmore
Buckley, P. A.	Ngatata	Wigley
Dignan	Peacock	Wilson.
•		

Noes, 16.

Barnicoat Johnston, J. Pharazyn Pollen Bonar McLean Richmond, J.C. Brandon Miller Chamberlin Waterhouse Oliver Williamson. Grace Peter Hart

Majority for, 2.

Motion agreed to.

#### GOVERNMENT INSURANCE ASSOCIA-TION BILL.

This Bill was read a third time.

On the question, That the Bill do pass, The Hon. Mr. PHARAZYN said,—I am sorry to oppose the Hon. the Colonial Secretary in this matter, but I am strongly convinced that this is a move in the wrong direction by the Government, and I think, therefore, that the Bill should be thrown out now, and the Government given an opportunity of considering the matter during the recess. There is an immense amount of opposition in the colony now to the Government carrying on the life-insur-ance business, and, if this Bill were not carried, the Government might have an opportunity of getting rid of the whole thing, and of coming to an understanding with some of the life-insurance companies to take over the whole con-cern. I think myself that the Government ought not to carry on a business of this kind. I had a conversation yesterday with a gentleman connected with life-insurance business, and he said, "If this Bill passes the Government Insurance is doomed—they will never be able to carry on the business on the new system." I am sure the interest of the Government would be best consulted by dropping the Bill. I believe it is a very vital question, and that no harm can in any case be done by postponing the measure. I have a strong opinion on this matter. I have been connected for some years with the Australian Mutual Provident Society, and am able to speak with some experience. The question has been so fully discussed by honourable members that there is no need for me to dwell upon it at length; but I shall call for a division on the

times, the names of those honourable members

who are opposed to the Bill.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Sir, it is a lamentable spectacle, after all the great care and consideration we have given to this Bill, to see the time of the Council wasted now in discussing the subject. The honourable gentleman who has just spoken is chairman of the Local Board of the Australian Mutual Provident Society, which society has, I believe, on more than one occasion, tried to acquire the Government Insurance business—to monopolize the whole business. I think the honourable gentleman will not say I am stating what is not correct in saying that on more than one occasion overtures have been made to purchase the Government Life Insurance business.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—Not by that

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I am assured on very good authority that it is so; and it comes very well from the honourable gentleman to enter his protest here against the passage of the measure, which he has never taken the trouble to consider till it has reached its last stage. Sir, this is not the first time the honourable gentleman has opposed a measure of a very important character, and recorded his protest against it in this Council. Honourable members may remember that, when the Wellington-Manawatu Railway Bill was before the Council, I fought for it as an independent member in this Council. honourable gentleman opposed me at every stage, and I fought and beat him every time. The honourable gentleman said it was a monstrous thing; that it would ruin the colony, destroy the Government, and do all sorts of things; and he entered his solemn protest against it in the Journals of the Council—and, within a month afterwards, the honourable gentleman purchased ten thousand pounds' worth of shares in the company! That is the sort of protest we have to consider now—that is the view we have to take of it. No doubt this is a protest of a similar character, with a view to preventing the Government from competing with insurance companies carrying on business in New Zealand. After the care and attention which has been given to this measure, I trust the good sense of the Council will not allow it to entertain for a single moment so frivolous a proposal as that of the honourable gentleman.

The Hon. Dr. GRACE.—I wish to correct an error in a statement that the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, no doubt inadvertently, has made. I have been a director of the Australian Mutual Provident Society for about fifteen years. I am usually an active man, and know a good deal about the business with which I am concerned; but I never knew of any overtures from the society to take over the business of the Government Life Insurance Department. It has always been the opinion of the actuary of the society, Mr. William Black - a very eminent man in his profession — that the Government should not motion, because I wish to record, for future | carry on such a business, and there has some262

times been a little feeling on both sides, but, generally speaking, nothing more than the ordinary prejudices of life and trade. When I have met Mr. Black I have freely stated to him my opinion that the Government Insurance Department is doing a great deal of good to the colony in inducing the colonists to insure their lives. I have considered this matter well, and I am not prepared to vote against the measure, because I believe this is the first divergence towards sound principle in the business of the department; and by and by, when the Central Board feels itself strong, I believe that it will admit the Government guarantee to be un-necessary for the success of the business. The institution by this Bill of a 10-per-cent. guarantee fund is a step in that direction. It is, perhaps, scarcely fair for the Hon. the Colonial Secretary to allude to the fact that the Hon. Mr. Pharazyn first opposed the Wellington-Manawatu Railway on patriotic principles—on the ground that it was adverse to the interests of the colony—and that, when the Bill passed, he put his money into the concern. I do not think that at all derogatory to the honourable gentleman. I was in favour of the Wellington and Manawatu Railway, and supported it thoroughly as a wise and necessary measure; but I neither took shares in it then nor since.

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—I heard the Hon. Mr. Pharazyn denounce the Wellington-

Manawatu Railway as a swindle.

The Hon. Mr. WILLIAMSON.—I should like to say a word on this subject, to put my idea on record, and it is that, if the Government do at any time find it necessary or think it right to part with the business of this Life Insurance Department, they should offer it to the people at home—that is, the people here in New Zealand-and that they should not give or even sell the business now established out of the colony. I think it is just possible, although the Hon. Dr. Grace says he has never heard of any overture on the part of the Mutual Prodent Association, that such overtures might have been made without his knowledge. The Head Board is resident in Australia, and it would be through them, I presume, and not through the local directorate, that any proposition of that kind would be made.

The Hon. Mr. BRANDON.—I think the New Zealand branch of that society would have known of it if any such overtures had been made with any view to business. I can echo the statement of the Hon. Dr. Grace, that the Board have no knowledge of it.

Bill passed.

#### HOKITIKA STEAM-TUG BILL.

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said he would remind honourable members that, owing to the peculiar circumstances of the West Coast, the Harbour Board was obliged, in order to pro-mote shipping, to have a steam tug-boat, which private enterprise had not provided. Nothing could be done by sailing vessels there unless there was a steamboat to facilitate their getting over the bar into the river. The Harbour

Hon. Dr. Grace

Board in 1879 obtained borrowing powers for £10,000. Of this amount they had already repaid £2,000 in the shape of a sinking fund, and, finding they had no further power to undertake work for the harbour, they came to the House and asked for power to borrow £8,000. Pro-bably £4,000 or £6,000 would suffice for the wants of the Board, but they wanted to be prepared in all cases. They were willing to be rated to secure the payment of interest on this borrowed money. As a revival of business was expected owing to new gold discoveries, the people were very anxious to obtain shipping facilities. The Bill came from the local Harbour Board; the payment of interest was secured by the rating clause which had been put in by the Local Bills Committee; and it was left to the ratepayers to consent to the raising of the loan or not.

The Hon. Mr. BONAR wished to say that the Bill had been promoted, as had been stated by the Hon. Mr. Lahmann, at the request of a majority of the Harbour Board, and, as Chairman of that body, he (Mr. Bonar) felt it to be

his duty to support it. Bill read a second time.

#### LAND BILL.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY. - Sir, I understand that the invariable practice of the Council has been, with reference to a Bill of this character, to merely move it pro forms, and to take the discussion on it as soon as it returns from the Waste Lands Committee; but I think it will be convenient here to explain, as shortly as possible, the two principal features of the Bill. These two features are, first, the prevention in the future of the sale of lands on the deferred-payment pastoral system; and, secondly, the enabling small settlers to acquire, in settled districts, portions of land not exceeding 320 acres. In moving this Bill, I am not going at present to enter into any discussion of the policy of the land laws, which, I regret to say, seems to me of a very unsatisfactory character; but I trust that, after the Bill leaves that Committee - with their suggestions, and amendments, if necessary—it will be of a better character than at present. Honourable members will remember that, in 1877, after a great deal of trouble, an Act was passed which was considered to be almost a perfect measure of its kind. That Act repealed, I think, fifty-seven Acts which were on the Statute Book; and I regret to say that, since that measure passed into law, we have had, on more than three or four occasions, to amend the land laws of the country. I will say no more about the matter at present, but suggest that this Bill should be referred to the Waste Lands Committee, so that honourable gentlemen may have an opportunity of reading it, because I understood yesterday that the Bill had not been circulated in time to enable honourable members to discuss it today. I therefore think that it will be a wise course if the suggestion I have made is adopted.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Before you put the question, Sir, I rise to a point of order.

I wish to direct your attention to the fact that | this Bill, while purporting to be a Land Act Amendment Bill, goes far beyond its title, and includes matters foreign to its title. In reference to that I need only refer you to the 30th clause, by which it is provided that a portion of the Westland and Nelson Coal Fields Administration Act shall be repealed. The clause states,-

"The following provision shall have operation in respect of the Westport Colliery Reserve, as the same is defined in the Fourth Schedule to 'The Westland and Nelson Coal Fields Administration Act, 1877,' and shall be read as

part of the said Act."

In other words, this Bill, while purporting to be a Land Act Amendment Bill, provides that one portion of the Bill, which has no connection with the land, shall be read as a portion of the Westland and Nelson Coal Fields Administration Act. And, then, in the 34th and 35th sections there are provisions amending the Municipal Corporations Act. quite evident that clauses amending the Municipal Corporations Act can have nothing whatever to do with a Land Act Amendment Bill. Now, upon this subject of introducing into one Bill clauses foreign to its title, and affecting matters outside the Bill, the practice of Parliament appears to be very clear. I may be allowed to read the following from May:-

"In preparing Bills care must be taken that they do not contain provisions not authorized by the order of reference; that their titles cor-respond with the order of reference, and that they are prepared in proper form; for, if it should appear during the progress of a Bill that these rules have not been observed, the House will order it to be withdrawn. A clause, for instance, relating to the qualification of members was held to be unauthorized in a Bill for regulating the expenses at elections. Such objections, however, should be taken before the second reading."

Now, I may likewise refer to the fact that the importance of this subject is referred to in the instructions given to His Excellency,

where it is distinctly provided-

"That, before assenting on behalf of Her Majesty to any Bills, the Governor shall take care, so far as may be practicable, that in the passing of all laws each different matter be provided for by a different law, and that there shall not be intermixed in one and the same law such things as have no proper relation to each other, and that no clause shall be inserted in or annexed to any law which shall be foreign to that law, and no perpetual clause be made part of a temporary law."

As an instance of the importance that has now for centuries been attached to this matter, I may read some remarks made so far back as the reign of King Charles II., when Bills were presented for his acceptance containing matters foreign to their titles. The remarks are so pertinent, and so applicable to public business at all times, that I think it will not be out of place if I read them :—

thing more I have to add, and that is, to let you know that I will never more suffer the course and method of passing laws to be changed; and that, if several matters shall ever again be tacked together in one Bill, that Bill shall certainly be lost, let the importance of it be never so great. The rest I leave to my Lord Chancellor."

The Lord Chancellor made some remarks

that are applicable to the present case :-

"The King hath so far expressed himself this day that 'tis evident the manner of your proceedings is to him as considerable as the matter, and that he will not accept a good Bill, how valuable soever it may be, unless it come to him in the old and decent method of Parliaments.

"The late way of tacking together several independent and incoherent matters in one Bill seems to alter the whole frame and constitution of Parliaments, and consequently of

the Government itself.

"It takes away the King's negative voice, in a manner, and forces him to take all or none, when sometimes one part of the Bill may be as dangerous for the kingdom as the other is necessary.

"It takes away the negative voice of the House of Peers, too, by the same consequence, and disinherits the Lords of that honour they were born to—the liberty of debating and judg-

ing what is good for the kingdom.

"It looks like a kind of defamation of the Government, and seems to suppose the King and House of Lords to be so ill affected to the public that a good Bill cannot carry itself through by the strength of its own reason and justice, unless it be helped forward by being tacked to another Bill that will be favoured.

"It does at least give up the greatest share of legislation to the Commons, and, by consequences, the chief power of judging what laws

are best for the kingdom.

"And yet it is a privilege that may be made use of against the Commons as well as by them; for, if this method hold, what can hinder the Lords, at one time or other, from taking advantage of a Bill very grateful to the Com-mons, and much desired by them, to tack a new clause to it of some foreign matter, which shall not be altogether so grateful, nor so much desired? and then the Commons must take all or none, too.

"Thus every good Bill shall be dearly bought at last; and one chief end of calling Parlia-ments—the making of good laws—shall be wholly frustrated and disappointed; and all this by departing from that method which the wisdom of our ancestors prescribed on purpose to prevent and exclude such inconveniences.

These innovations the King resolves to

abolish; and hath commanded me to say to

you, State super vias antiquas.'

Sir, the inconvenience of inserting in Bills matter foreign to their titles is obvious. We have had occasion to refer to the subject more than once during the present session, and I think it is high time we should put our foot "The King said, on that occasion, 'One down decidedly and say we will not pass legislation unless that legislation be introduced in accordance with the forms of Parliament. The forms of Parliament are for the protection of the subject, and it is important in the highest degree that we should carefully observe them. The point of order I have raised is, whether it is really competent for us to go on with this Bill, containing, as it does, so much matter foreign to its title.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Before you rule, Sir, I would call attention to the fact that this Bill is not wider in its scope than the Act which it amends. The provisions of this Bill all refer to lands, and nothing but lands. No doubt it is convenient that the title and the contents of a Bill should agree, but some divergence is not unusual.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.—Speaking to the point of order, I would mention that there is a distinction between waste lands of the Crown and reserves, which are not waste lands of the Crown in any sense, but are provided for under distinct Acts.

The Hon. the SPEAKER.—The question of order to which my attention is drawn is one of very great importance. There is no doubt whatever that the rule, as laid down by the honourable gentleman who has drawn attention to this subject, has become as universally accepted as a parliamentary rule as any that can be referred to — that is, the rule that no matter foreign to its title shall be introduced into any Bill. The rule, being so clear and undoubted, has been so generally accepted as to have become a parliamentary law. The ques-tion to consider now is, how far the clauses referred to in this Bill are in violation of the law. I cannot myself say that it is so clear to my mind that I should conceive it to be my duty to rule that this Bill ought to be laid aside. The ground on which I hesitate to de that is that there is a very intimate relation between the subject-matters of the Bill-waste lands and reserves. No doubt reserves are not waste lands, but in the land laws of the colony there are constantly introduced regulations with regard to reserves. The second objection-that as to municipal endowments - seems of a more grave character, to my mind. I think that, undoubtedly, these clauses ought to have formed the subject-matter of a Bill bearing its proper title — namely, "An Act to lease Endowments." That would have been its proper title. But, at the same time, it is so much in relationship to the rest of the Bill that I could not take it upon myself to rule imperatively that this Bill ought to be laid aside. It is, however, competent for the Council to do so. and I could not go so far as to say it would do wrong in proceeding to this length. It is highly objectionable to introduce in any Bill matter foreign to its title, and I have stated to the best of my ability what I think in this particular case it amounts to. As to the question of referring the Bill to the Waste Lands Committee after its second reading, if it should pass that stage, that is not a question of order, as the Bill would be referred to that Committee according to rule.

Hon. Mr. Waterhouse

The Hon. Mr. MILLER .- The Hon. the Colonial Secretary seems to feel that this Bill has so many defects that he almost appeared to rejoice that it would have to go to the Waste Lands Committee, in order, no doubt, that some of those defects may be removed. Now, them may be some good things in this Bill, but I am prepared to say that, as to some points, it is one of the most extraordinary measures that I have ever had to read since I have been in Parliament. We have an annual dose of Land Bill towards the end of the session: that, we are quite accustomed to; and there is a beautiful arithmetical progression, I think, in the complication of each Land Bill, as we go on from year to year. This Bill, I think, will represent the complete confusion of our land law about as well as any measure any honourable member had ever to peruse. If you take this Bill and try to read it you find you have to get the Acts of 1877, 1879, 1880, 1882, and 1883, till you have a regular library round you, over almost each clause. I understand there is a Consolidation Bill to be prepared for introduction next session, and all I can say is that I do not envy the honourable gentleman who has that task If he is possessed of the necessary attainments to simplify all these Acts and Bills he will prove that he has intellectual powers of a very high order indeed. Now, in this Bill there are some things which I think no man will be able to explain-neither the Government nor anybody in this Parliament; and I believe there is one provision in clause 4 which has been passed—so I am given to understand—without even the knowledge of the Government. I cannot think that the provision of clause 4, to do away with the power of appeal from the decision of the Waste Lands Board to the Supreme Court, was ever seriously contemplated. Looking to the state of affairs with which we are all acquainted—and which there is no necessity to make further reference to now—I cannot think that any man representing a constituency of British people would for a moment say that such a clause as that ought to pass. If you take away the power of appeal, I think you will do one of the worst things you could do. Now, there is one thing I am glad to see in the Bill, which I can agree with, and that is, doing away with the pastoral deferred-payment system. I think it is a very good thing to sweep that system out of the way: that has been a dreadful source of trouble to every one concerned. But, when you come to these clauses referring to deferred payment agricultural lands, you find running through them the most extraordinary provisions one can possibly imagine, as any one may see who looks at them calmly, without any prejudice: I can do so, for I have no sort of interest in any deferred-payment lands whatever-in fact, I have nothing whatever to do with them; but I may say that I regard the agricultural deferredpayment system as, on the whole, very satisfactory. I think it is a system well adapted to the circumstances of the colony, that it is a thoroughly conservative measure, and that, looking at it altogether, it does enable thes



persons who do not possess sufficient capital to become immediately freeholders, yet to become a very useful class of settlers in the colony. Now, what do these clauses from 6 to 18 do, and why were they put in? I defy any one to read these clauses without coming to the con-clusion that they have been inserted for the purpose of striking a deadly blow at the system of deferred payment. You cannot come to any other conclusion. They hamper the settler with unnecessary and arbitrary restrictions, which are at variance with the present law, and they give what I think are unjust powers to the Government, and, in fact, I believe that, if they become law-and I hope they will not they will be about as unpopular as anything that could be done. I would ask why clause 8 is in the Bill at all. It alters section 60 of theLand Act of 1877. Now, that section 60

"Any person of the age of eighteen years and upwards may become a selector herounder; but no selector, having assigned his interest hereunder, and no person who has forfeited the right to hold the land selected by him by reason of the fraudulent breach of any of the conditions of his license, and no person who shall at any time have acquired a freehold under the deferred-payment system, shall be allowed at any time to make a new selection under this

It is quite right, certainly, that, if a man is proved to have been guilty of a fraudulent breach of his conditions, he ought not to be entitled to make a new selection. But by this clause 8 you substitute the word "wilful" for "fraudulent." What in the name of Goodness is the use of the change? It seems to me far better to retain the word "fraudulent." I suppose there must be some reason for the change, but it is certainly most difficult to divine what it is. Clause 9 deprives the selector of his right under the present law to his Crown grant at the end of three years, and makes him wait six years before he can get his grant. Why should the law be altered in that respect? I have heard it said that the idea is that by this extension you keep people from getting into the clutches of the money-lender. I think that is an altogether wrong idea to begin with; but, if it were correct, I do not think that it is the duty of the Legislature to legislate in any way with the idea of interfering with the operations between the settler and those persons who furnish him with means. What is it to do with us? We know perfectly well that a man must get advances of money from time to time; and it is quite easy to see that this would operate prejudicially to the selector. He can, if he gets his grant, obtain a larger sum of money than otherwise, and the difference will go to enable him to improve his land. I think the law is very good as it is, and that it had better be left so. Under the Act of 1882 it is provided that the Commissioner can calculate the capital value of the unpaid instalments of a deferred-payment selector, and on the capital value being paid the grant is issued. Under this Bill a man, though he had paid every

shilling of the capitalized value of his instalments, cannot get his grant until, I think, he has been on the land six years. Why should that be? It seems to me that it is hampering these unfortunate selectors with a lot of unnecessary conditions. I hope, if the Bill goes to the Waste Lands Committee, the Committee will go through these very serious changes and let us see what is the meaning of them. I feel quite sure that my view of them is correct. I do not say that with any prejudice at all; but I say it in the interests of these deferred-payment selectors, who, I think, would have much reason to complain if these clauses were imposed on them. Here is a wonderful clause—the 12th—which reads, "Whenever any two persons, one of whom has become a selector of Crown land sold on deferred payments, and the other is an owner or occupier of freehold land, have lawfully intermarried," they may do all sorts of things. I believe there was a case in which it was shown that the difficulties of our land laws had reached such a marvellous pitch that the Land Board were unable to allow a young woman to sleep away from a dwelling-house on some land she had taken up. I believe it became necessary to prevent her from going to sleep in her own father's house. I believe that is the reason why this clause was introduced: so it had, perhaps, better clause. Then, there is a clause which gives power to the Board to "reduce the original valuation of improvements upon any land forfeited under the seventieth section of the said Act." So the unfortunate man is subject to have the valuation of his improvements reduced at the sole will of the Board. It is very difficult to understand why that power should be given at all. I believe that, after the valuation had been arrived at in the ordinary way, no power should be given to reduce it. Then, there is clause 17, "One-fourth of rents from perpetual leases to be paid to local bodies." I think it is a very good thing that local bodies should get some fixed revenue; but why a fourth of the proceeds of perpetual leases? Is the object to make the perpetuallease system popular in the country?

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—They get

a portion of the Land Fund now.
The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—Yes; that is the ordinary Land Fund: but this is to be one-fourth of the receipts from perpetual leasing: that is to say, it is a little general avantage. as the French say, to these people-" If you take up land on perpetual lease you get a fourth of the revenue." That is the way I think it will be looked upon by some people. Then, there is clause 20, which says, "The Governor may, from time to time, by Proclamation, set aside any pastoral lands in the vicinity of a settled district." That is a proper power, and may very well be given; but there are some other provisions in the clause which do not seem to me to be at all in the right direction. For in-

"The Board, with the sanction of the Governor, may offer the lease of such lands for

public auction at such price as it thinks fit, | subject to the approval of the Governor. No person shall be allowed to become the purchaser of more than one such lease in any part

of the colony.

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Here it will be seen at once that, if a man takes up one of these pieces of ground and comes to grief, none of his neighbours can buy him out. At any rate, no person holding pastoral lands of the Crown can buy. It must be some outside person, and I should think the unfortunate man's market would be made very much worse. Then, there is the 22nd clause: "No transfer of run valid unless sanctioned by Board." Well, it is sometimes convenient to. transfer a run to a mortgagee, and you have already given the Board power to allow it. This seems to me a rather unnecessary provision. In clause 25 I think there will have to be some amendment: "Valuation for improvements may be recovered in a summary manner by person entitled thereto." That is the sidenote, and the whole clause reads,

"Whenever a lease or license for the occupation of pastoral or other lands is sold or otherwise disposed of subject to a payment of the valuation of the improvements made on such lands, and such payment is not made within fourteen days after the sale or other disposal of such lease or license, the person entitled to receive such payment may sue for and recover the same by summary procedure in any Court of competent jurisdiction from the person who

should make such payment."

Now, I suppose the people who framed this clause have forgotten that these runs are sold twelve months before the expiry of the term, and, consequently, the unfortunate man who had to pay the valuation for improvements would be lying out of his money for about twelve months. I do not see any necessity for that. If it was provided that within fourteen days of the expiration of the term the valuation should be paid, I think it would be a very good provision. I do trust the Council will take into serious consideration these clauses referring to rural lands on deferred payment, and see if they really do think there is any good whatever in them. I must confess I am perfectly at a loss to understand that there is. I hope the Council will also well consider clause 4, which takes away the right of appeal from the Board to the Supreme Court. There is a gentleman who is the author of one of the principal amendments of the law relating to this deferred-payment system. I dare say honourable members have read a great many of his letters; but, at any rate, he thoroughly understands the subject.

The Hon. Captain FRASER. — A little too

much.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—Well, at any rate, he thoroughly understands it; and I find that this is his opinion. [Extract read.] Now, this Bill goes dead against that, because under it, although a man may pay the capitalized value of his unpaid instalments, he cannot get his grant for three years longer: at any rate, he cannot get his grant at once, as he could be-

fore. I do not see why that should be altered. I think the law is far better as it is, in that respect; and I think every one of these clauses referring to deferred-payment lands had better go out of the Bill.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE .- I do not altogether like this Bill. It is stated to proceed from a Liberal Government, but it seems to me that its provisions are of a most illiberal character. So far as the Bill is intended to promote the settlement of the land and the diffusion of the land, it appears to me to go in an entirely contrary direction. The Hon. Mr. Miller has expressed his approbation of the proposed repeal of the power to sell pastoral lands on deferred payment. Under the present law, on the expiry of the leases, runs may be cut up in smaller blocks and leased with the right of purchase, or, rather, sold on the principle of deferred payment. Now, I think that is a principle calculated to be very beneficial. It will have the effect of creating a large number of what may be called "yeoman" sheep-farmers: not farmers on an extensive scale, but, still, sheep-farmers on a scale calculated to lead to the settlement of the country in a much more effectual manner than if the land were held in large blocks. Now, it is obvious that, if that is so, as the present Bill does away with the existing law on the subject, it is a reactionary measure. I may be told that the existing system has led to the introduction of dummyism to a considerable extent, and to the thwarting of the intentions of the promotes of the Act. But it would be very easy to provide an effectual remedy to check such an evil. Why has dummyism existed? Simply because the law has not been sufficiently stringent to prevent attempts at dummyism. But it would be easy to introduce a clause in the Bill which should be sufficiently stringent to accomplish that object effectually; and, if the Bill is proceeded with, I shall be prepared to propose a clause which I think will altogether prevent dummyism, and it will have the effect, I think, of realizing the intention of the Legis lature when passing the Act—that of promoting the formation in our midst of a large body of yeomanry sheep-farmers. If we provide some such clause as this :-

"Any person who shall be guilty of commit-ting any breach of the provisions of 'The Land Act, 1877,' or its amendments regarding lands disposed of by deferred payments or by pastoral lease or perpetual lease, by obtaining such lands not exclusively for his own use or benefit. shall be liable to a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months; and every one aiding or abetting in such breach shall be liable to the

same punishment-

you may depend upon it that this system of dummyism will be put a stop to for ever. The other provisions of the Bill are likewise in many respects of a very illiberal character. Under the existing law, if a person taking land upon deferred payments finds he cannot carry on, he is at liberty, by sacrificing what he has paid, and by sacrificing the improvements he has made, to get rid of his liabilities.

Hon. Mr. Miller

This is, I think, a very reasonable provision of the law; but the Government called it in question, and, in a case that occupied the attention of the Court some time ago—the case of Maitland versus Mervyn—they raised an issue on the point, and there the Court decided, not only that the person who took up the land on deferred payments was at liberty to abandon his license without being subject to being prosecuted, but that, in the opinion of the Court, it was essential to good public policy that that should be a provision of the law. I see, in its judgment, the Court said,—"If it were held that a licensee could not

"If it were held that a licensee could not throw up his license, settlers might be driven to waste years of time and labour on a badlychosen lot, not being able to afford to lose both the section and their whole purchase-money. The duty of the statute may well be to leave the settler free to abandon an injudicious choice without further penalty than the loss of his previous payments and value of his improve-

ments."

The Supreme Court thought that to be in accordance with the dictates of sound policy; but the Government come down and say, "We will not allow you to free yourselves from these liabilities unless we can get the uttermost farthing you possess." Is that a wise and liberal measure? It seems to me to be the exact opposite; and I regret that a Government that, in one respect, is supposed to be a Liberal one—though I suppose in another it is regarded as having Conservative elements—should have brought forward a measure of so narrow and illiberal a character as that to which I refer.

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—I understand that the last section of the 4th clause is a mistake: at all events the Hon. the Premier was not aware that it was in. I told him of objections to it, and he was surprised it was in the Bill: so we shall have no difficulty with regard to it. As to the 5th clause, which repeals clauses of the Act of 1877, I cannot understand how any Government should have consented to such a thing. This is a boon; we fought for it, and we got it for the people in 1877, to enable old settlers, who had borne the heat and burden of the day, to place their sons upon portions of pastoral deferred-payment lands. Unfortunately there have been found in Otago men so base and dishonest that they either made false declarations themselves or induced others to make false declarations, and got people settled on the land who were not bond fide settlers; and I believe the late Government are to blame very much for not taking proper action in this matter when they might have done so. I understand that the Government have no objection to such land clauses as the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse proposes to introduce. He proposes that the whole of these clauses should be restored; and I hope to see them restored. I say it is one of the greatest boons we can give to the old settlers to enable them to start their children on the land. With regard to the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Miller \* to restrictions, I may say that I approve of

every one of these restrictions. They are made to shield the free-selectors from the money-I have not the least doubt that many of these people have money almost forced upon them. The curse of this country has been the facility of borrowing and lending money, and I think it will be found that these restrictions are all intended really as a protection to the free-selector. Of that I have not the slightest doubt. I think that in Committee we should know a little more about it, and we can get evidence if it is required. In the 8th clause I believe the word "fraudulent" was introduced in mistake. Of course, as I have said, the 9th clause was put in for the purpose of not giving facilities to money-lenders: people are too eager to borrow money, and money-lenders are too eager to lend. In Committee I think we shall be able to make a very good Bill of this. In conclusion, I would say that I am very glad to see clause 38 in the Bill, the object of which is to settle Scotch crofters on the land. I do not know any finer race of people in the world. You will remember our late friend Sir Donald McLean; you will see hundreds of men in the Isle of Skye like him; and there are the finest women I ever saw-large, fine, strong, well built, and, as Mr. Macandrew says, very prolific. These people are toilers on the sea and workers on land. The land proposed to be given them-ten acres. —is quite sufficient, quite as much as they have now. I have no doubt we shall be able to get the best of them out, and I should not only be glad to see them in Otago, but in other parts of the colony; there is ample room for them in the North. I have no doubt that before the Bill comes out of Committee it will be a very good Bill.

The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE. - Sir, I have only one great objection with regard to the Bill, and that is this: that year after year incontinently, possibly carelessly, we introduce Bill after Bill upon the sacred subject of land legislation, all more or less conflicting with and confusing the legislation that has gone before. I understand that we are to have something of a consolidation Act soon. It is evident that during this short session there has not been time for that; and so we have this Bill, touching every sort of subject, which I think may be made a useful Bill in the Waste Lands Committee when we are told what the Bill really contains. What may be the true occasion for it we have not been told. There are a number of subjects mentioned here amongst others, "Highland crofters." That, I presume, is just one of those hobbies to which we are bound to give a fair trial. The Hon. the Premier has every right to have every sympathy with those persons; and there is another gentleman of great importance in this country who also makes a "hobby" of it. I cannot see any possible harm in that provision, though it appears to me that, on the verge of a consolidation Act, we might very well wait to legislate for that until the consolidation Act is brought down. In the meantime every possible power is existing for the introduction

of that class of immigrants. I do not know that the provision is wanted, but it can do no possible harm. Then, there is a little touch of municipal endowment law that is confusing the Bill. Then, here is a provision as to the Westport Colliery Reserve. I did not hear Mr. Miller emphatic upon this, and do not know what its particular merits may be. All these things may be necessary to be legislated upon, but they are very diverse, and I cannot help thinking that the course which the Colonial Secretary is about to take is a very useful one, for the Waste Lands Committee, after hearing what the Government has to say, will be able to see if it is desirable to pass any particular amending clause, which may be necessary to remedy some existing inconvenience. At the same time, I hardly think it necessary to go into such a variety of subjects as are here touched upon. I have mentioned a few; there are a considerable number more. I think are a considerable number more. that throughout there is this horrible system, which we are getting into more and more, of being told that we must not go this way or that, and being poked about until we are not masters of ourselves. If these selectors want to borrow money, let them borrow; if they want to buy a considerable portion of land, let them do so. All that little reaction of Communism which we had a few years ago, and which was intended to attack those persons who were engaged in pastoral pursuits
—that idea has worn out, and there is no
particular necessity for making a cry of the holdings being large or small or anything else. Going through the Bill as I have done, and endeavouring to master it, I think it is wise that it should go before the Waste Lands Committee; and I hope that the Bill will not only be considerably shortened in that Committee—for there are many clauses in it which are not immediately required—but that it will also be made a little more clear, and that the Committee will put the actuallynecessary parts of the Bill in such a shape as to commend themselves to this Council. For my own part, I have not heard any particular reason of urgency for passing any part of this Bill. In regard to the "dummy" clause, we passed one not long ago. I am sorry there should be any difficulty on the part of the deferred-payment selector in connection with his financial system; but, if you make it difficult for him to get money one way, he will get it another; you will only grind him down the more, for money he must get, and the result will be that he will have to take it at 20 or 30 per cent., instead of paying 10 per cent. That is about the relief which this Bill will afford in that respect. I believe, myself, that, if there were a clause stopping all purchases in future, and giving free grants, it would be better. They all come back. How often, for example, have we had to relieve these deferred-payment selectors! And yet here we are now going to put the screw on them in another way. would much rather myself see the country pardon all who cannot pay, and say, "We will never again give a deferred-payment selection."

Hon. Sir G. S. Whitmore

There is not a single bargain we have made be it with a coal company or anybody else-but what these people come back to us asking for Let us have done with this sort of thing. Sir, I have nothing to say against the Bill. I think we have not properly understood some of its provisions, and the Hon. the Colombia nial Secretary will no doubt tell the Waste Lands Committee the necessity for them. But, presuming that this is a Bill of importance, I hope it will be passed; and, if it is not of importance, I hope it will be set aside, because it will only complicate our land laws, and we are assured on the best authority that we are to have a complete Land Act next session consolidating the whole of the law on the subject.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—Sir, I would rather that the discussion on this Bill had taken place after the measure had been reported upon by the Waste Lands Committee, inasmuch as it will now involve two discussions on the same subject. Hitherto, the practice has been generally observed - although there is no Standing Order to that effect—that no discussion takes place on the second reading of a Land Bill, but that the discussion takes place when it is reported from the Waste Lands Committee. Now, the Hon. Mr. Miller accused the Colonial Secretary in these words: He said the Colonial Secretary "seemed almost to rejoice that this Bill had to go before a Select Committee." But the honourable mem-ber has been long enough a member of this Council to know that all such Bills do go before a Select Committee. He has been a member of the Waste Lands Committee for a good number of years, and knows that it is not a question of the course that the Colonial Secretary would like to take, but that it is a question of necessity

The Hon. Mr. MILLER .- Who said that it

had not to go before a Committee?
The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—The honourable member stated-because I took down his words-that the Colonial Secretary "seemed almost to rejoice that the Bill had to go before a Select Committee, so that it may be dealt

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—Hear, hear.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS. - Well, I say that my honourable friend the Colonial Secretary would rather carry the Bill through without any Select Committee at all; but he knew he had to submit to its going before the Waste Lands Committee, and the Hon. Mr. Miller ought to know it.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—Know what?

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—That all such Bills had to go before the Waste Lands Committee. Well, Sir, I trust this discussion will now cease.

The Hon. Mr. MILLER.—Hear, hear.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—And that the Bill will be allowed to go to the Waste Lands Committee at once: otherwise we shall only have two discussions on the subject; and at this period of the session that is hardly desirable.

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The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—I think that the question of settling the waste lands of the colony is one that should not be hastily dealt. with, and the existing system should not be deliberately set aside in the manner proposed by the Bill. Even at this late period of the session we might, with ease and advantage, spare two or three hours in discussing a Bill of such great importance as the one before us at the present time. I have read this Bill over carefully, and this morning I read it over again, and it is very difficult for one to make up his mind what to do with it. It is shreds and patches from beginning to end. There are things in it that have no business in the Bill, and, on the whole, it is difficult for one to say whether he will vote for it or not. As I have said, the land system is one of those things we should not deal hastily with, and I am glad it has got to go before the Waste Lands Committee in the usual way. Notwithstanding all the hurry of business at this stage of the session, I hope the Committee will take time in considering it, and will be careful with it, because, if it comes back to the Council in mything like the shape that it is in now, I, for one, shall be compelled to oppose it. I should like to refer particularly to the 4th clause, in which it is proposed to take away the right of appeal to the Supreme Court. The Hon. Captain FRASER.—That is a mis-

take. The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—It is not a mistake. It is purposely put in there. And I wish to refer to a case in which I myself was misled, and that was a case that occurred in connection with the Waste Lands Board of Otago. I had got it into my head that a certain case was one of dummyism. I believed that all through, but I could not give any real reasons for doing so, because nearly everything that came within my mowledge about it was to the contrary effect. The case, on coming before the Waste Lands Board, was investigated very thoroughly, and I took a great deal of trouble in reading up all the evidence that was taken. After reading and studying the whole of it I came to the conclusion that if I had been sitting on the Waste Lands Board of Otago I could not have given the case as one of dummyism; and I venture to say that nebody who had carefully read the evidence as it stood could have done so either. Well, Sir, a great deal of political feeling was imported into the matter, and it was tried to be taken to the Supreme Court; but those men-the members of the Board—who conscientously gave their decision according to the evidence, were abused from one end of the place to the other. Moreover, one of the mem-bers of the Board incurred such a degree of unpopularity that he subsequently lost his wat as a member of the General Assembly. If that gentleman had wished to act otherwise, in order to make himself popular, he could have easily done so, and would coubtless have gone into the General Assembly with flying colours. I give that as a reason why this clause should be struck out of the Bill, because members of the Waste Lands Board are gene-

rally political men, and political pressure issometimes brought to bear upon them. With regard to deferred payment settlers, I have heard persons declaring against these. A great deal of good settlement is going on under that system, and it is absurd to say that, because in some cases they have failed in their payments, the system should be swept away altogether. How many people have bought land from private individuals, and have also failed in their payments! From my own knowledge and experience, I say that this system has been the means of settling a great many people on the land who would not otherwise have got there. We have changed the law of 1877 in respect to these unfortunate deferred-payment settlers, and no doubt it was considered wise to do that, though I do not think it was wise to alter the law at the time. But it was altered so as togive the settlers a Crown grant in three years; and now you deliberately propose to go back to the Act of 1877, and make it six years. Now, that changing and chopping about ought to be avoided. I do not think it should be put back to the old system. These people have to get money from their friends and others in order to enable them to get on. Every one is not born a farmer, and a good number of people go on tothe land who ought not to be on it at all; and their failure is held up as a bugbear to prevent others from going on to the land.

The Hon. Mr. HART.—Sir, I think a Bill of this kind ought to be brought in at the commencement of the session, and not at its close. If brought in towards the close of the session, when so many other things are under consideration, it cannot meet with that attention which its importance deserves, and there is no subject regarding which so many changes have been made from time to time as the land laws of the colony. Now, we have had representations from the Agent-General for New Zealand that there is no greater difficulty which he finds in the way of inducing persons to come out and settle in this colony than the constant changing of the land laws; they cannot tell at once what the land laws exactly are. And it appears to me, for these reasons, without going: into details and particulars, that no great danger will occur to the colony by the postponement of this Bill till next session. Under those circumstances I move, That the second reading of this Bill be made an order for this-

day six months.

Amendment withdrawn, by the leave of the Council.

Bill read a second time.

LIFE ASSURANCE POLICIES BILL. The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said the measure was rendered almost essentially necessary in consequence of another which had that day been passed by the Council—the Government Insurance Association Bill. He found it would be necessary, owing to amendments which had been made in the Government Insurance Association Bill, to make certain slight amendments in the present Bill when in Committee, 270

with a view of making it more in conformity with the Bill to which he had alluded. He might explain that from time to time policyholders were in the habit of obtaining loans on their insurance policies, especially when they had reached a surrender value, and it had been found very inconvenient to obtain these loans on account of the great expenditure incurred in preparing mortgages of that kind: it was even found necessary to obtain an absolute assignment, and some persons had actually been dishonest enough, after the money had been paid over to them, to refuse to refund it. Now, the policy of this Bill was pretty well on the lines of what was known as the Land Transfer Act: that was to say, every dealing with the policy was recorded on its very face, so that every one on looking at the policy would be able to see exactly what the incumbrance was. There was another very good feature in the Bill, and that was the protection which it proposed to give to unfortunate traders who might have become bankrupt. To a certain extent, and under certain conditions, policies were to be protected from the operation of the Bankruptcy Act—except in the case of fraud, where, of course, no such transaction could possibly hold water. There was also a provision with regard to the right of married women to insure, and another with regard to the insurance, of a very limited character, of children up to a certain age. But one of its best features was the power given whereby moneys made payable for the benefit of minors might be dealt with in a very simple way, and without the cumbrous procedure that was now required to be followed before advantage could be derived from moneys to which they might become entitled. Honourable members knew that where money or property was left to infants, and where no guardian or trustee was appointed, it was necessary to make application to the Supreme Court for a trustee to be appointed, thereby entailing a great deal of expense. Under this Bill the Public Trustee might be appointed, and he had the right to deal with the property in the manner provided by the Bill. He had the power, without further interference, to apply the moneys of minors towards their maintenance and educa-And there was another good feature in the Bill, and that was the provision for the payment of small sums of money without requiring probate or letters of administration. The process of obtaining probate or letters of administration was generally of a very expensive character, because of the difficulties which might sometimes arise, and which could not possibly be foreseen; and it was provided that sums not exceeding £200 could be paid to the legal representative of a deceased person without going through the process of obtaining probate or letters of administration. Then, provision was also made for what were known as settlement policies. This, he thought, would be the safeguard of the public, and would no doubt meet the approval of the Council. The

Act. He hoped the second reading would be agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND had a very few words to say regarding this Bill, which struck him as being a very attractive one in one of its main provisions—in its following the lines of the Land Transfer Act. He merely rose now to point out to his honourable friend the Colonial Secretary that the Council had just agreed to the second reading of a Land Bill, several of the clauses of which were avowedly aimed at the object of preventing farmers or occupiers of deferred-payment land from mortgaging their property. Now, farmers, generally speaking, were men carrying on a trade of more or less stability, and had need for advances. In the present measure, on the other hand, was contained a provision for the mortgaging of insurances, which, of all sorts of property, were the last that they ought to desire to see mortgaged. It was curious to note that the present Government were addicted to bringing in "balancing" Bills of this character. They had submitted to the Council two Bills for facilitating the shipment of coal by sea, and another for facilitating its travelling by land. However, he intended to support the present

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN would not like to see the Bill pass, and should vote against it. This was an old friend; it was the very Bill which the Council rejected in 1882.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—No.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN could get the Bill, and, although he had not had time to compare the two measures minutely, yet, on glancing over the present Bill, he had no hesitation in saying it was substantially the same as that which was rejected in 1882. It was an extraordinary thing that these Bills always came in almost on the last day of the session, when honourable members had not time to discuss them properly. It was killed in 1882, and he hoped it would be killed now. This measure would enable a policy to be handed from one person to another. A policy was a provision for one's family, or something to fall back on in one's old age, and it was entirely contrary to the principle of life insurance that a policy should be handed about like a bag of sugar He did not like any insurance business to be come a case of "trucking," such as this, for it was nothing more. Of all things, none should be more carefully protected than life-insurance policies, which were a provision for a man's Every encouragement should be given family. to the practice of making provision for one's family, and gambling in life-insurance policies should be discouraged as much as possible.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY said, if the honourable member had read clause 6, he would

not be speaking as he was doing.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN said it was really impossible to read

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—The fac

is, you do not understand it.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN was bound to say rest of the Bill was mere machinery for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the challenged whenever he had brought forward

Hon. Mr. P. A. Buckley

his Bills, he would not have been able to give satisfactory explanations of them; but the Council had had mercy on him. He did not blame the honourable gentleman for not knowing all about his Bills, because it was not possible for Ministers coming into office in the middle of a session to study every measure; but there were many Bills which the honourable gentleman had brought forward without knowing as much about them perhaps as he (Mr. McLean) did, because he had studied every one of them, and had tried to master them. He arged the honourable gentleman to postpone the consideration of the present Bill to enable the Council to look into it properly. He would like to point out, however, that policies were already protected up to £2,000, so that the provision in this Bill with reference to the protection of policies was nothing new; and the provision with regard to probate was also the law at the present time, as the Council would find.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Where? The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—In another Bill. The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY. - What

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN could not put his hands on the particular Bill at the moment; but he knew there was a provision somewhere under which payments up to £200 could be made without probate.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY. - Fifty pounds in the Public Trust Office: that is all.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN would say, in conclusion, it was for the Council to decide whether they would give policy-holders the power to hand their policies about like bags of sugar. He begged to move, That the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE was very much disappointed at the amendment of the Hon. Mr. McLean. He could have supported the honourable gentleman if he had moved the adjournment of the debate till next week, which he believed was the sense of the Council. This was a very intricate Bill, a Bill the importance of which they could hardly appreciate without paying very great attention to it; and those honourable gentlemen who had devoted most attention to the measure seemed to be of opinion that it required further consideration. moved the adjournment of the debate till next sitting-day.

Debate adjourned.

WEST COAST SETTLEMENT RESERVES BILL.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said it would be in the recollection of honourable members that in the year 1880 an Act was passed called the West Coast Settlement Act; and a very able Commissioner — Sir William Fox was appointed to make investigations with regard to the rights of the Natives in connection with what was known as the confiscated land in the Taranaki District. That gentleman had given them some very valuable and able reports, with which honourable gentlemen had no doubt made themselves acquainted. object of the present Bill was to amend "The West Coast Settlement Reserves Act, 1881," and repeal the Act of 1883, which was found to be unworkable. So as not to have more than one Act, the present Bill embodied all that was good of the one and repealed all that was bad of the other. There was a very curious provision in the Act of 1881, which had rendered it difficult for the Public Trustee, in whom these lands were vested, to carry on the business of the department. The wording of the provision was so queer that it was almost impossible to say whether the Public Trustee or the officer under him had the means of deal-He should here exing with these lands. plain that, in addition to the Public Trustee, in whom the lands were vested, the Commissioner of West Coast Reserves was also appointed to act, and, as he (Mr. P. A. Buckley) had said before, it was impossible to say on whom the duties devolved. He proposed, on going into Committee on the present Bill, to introduce one or two amendments restricting the powers given to the Public Trustee. It would be seen that clause 4 proposed that the Public Trustee should have charge of the reserves, with power of lease or exchange in such manner as in his discretion he might think fit. He (Mr. P. A. Buckley) did not propose to give him that power of discretion, but to cause him to act under the direction of the Board. The next clause gave the Public Trustee power to grant leases in his own name; but he proposed that this should be vested in the Board in terms of the Act. The Public Trustee found great difficulty in leasing the properties, because of the want of proper machinery in the Act itself. He need scarcely remind honourable members that the settlement on the confiscated territory had been a great success. A great portion of the land had been taken up, and a great deal more would be taken up if the terms of the leases were modified. This modification was in the direction of extending the period of the leases from twenty-one to thirty years. The reason was that a great portion of the land was covered with bush, and by this extension the settlers would get a reasonable time in which to clear it. There was one other clause to which it might be necessary to call attention, and that was the clause providing for the confirmation of leases which were given by leading chiefs of hapus, and which were found not to be strictly legal. Sir William Fox recommended that those leases should be validated, because they were entered upon in a bona fide manner, and Sir William Fox said this was only reasonable and fair to the Natives. He (Mr. P. A. Buckley) hoped the Council would agree to the second reading of the Bill.

The Hon. Captain FRASER said, as such enormous powers were to be granted to the Public Trustee, he would ask if the officer was the same individual who a short time ago refused to sell a vast tract of Native land in the South Island, and, after thus refusing, sold it to a syndicate at a very low price.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—No.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN had taken some trouble to go through this Bill, with a view of informing himself as to the necessity for the changes it proposed to make in the law relating to the administration of the coast settlements, and he confessed that, after the most careful attention he had been able to give it, he could see no need at all, at least no pressing need, for the proposed alterations in the law. The only point really was that to which the Hon. the Colonial Secretary had alluded, the possibility of doubt as to the interpretation of one of the clauses of the Act of 1881-whether it was intended that the Public Trustee should be the administrative officer in certain cases, or another trustee, a subordinate officer, appointed under the Act. To his mind, however, the context of the Act left no room for doubt at all on the subject. He saw no very great necessity for the introduction of this Bill at all, except possibly for an object sought to be met by clause 16 of the Bill. That clause proposed to introduce a change in the administration of the settlement which, to his mind, might be found to prove fatal to the fundamental principles and object of the West Coast Settlement Act altogether, as far as the interests of the Natives were concerned. Clause 16 of the Bill was a modification of a clause in the Act of 1883, which ran as follows:

"It shall be lawful for any grantee of reserves administered under the said Act and this Act, or any number of such grantees, whether or not of adult age or under coverture, by a writing under his or their hand, signed in the presence of the West Coast Settlement Reserves Trustee, to appoint any one or more of such grantees to receive the share or shares of the rents due to the person or persons making such appointment; and the receipt of the person or persons so appointed shall be a sufficient discharge for the payment of such share or shares as aforesaid."

The original Act restricted the power of giving authority to receive the rents and profits of these reserves to the beneficiaires or grantees; but this Bill provided that any other person or persons, whether Natives or not, might be appointed to receive these rents or profits. Now, he had had some experience, on the Thames Gold Fields, of circumstances in which the Natives were the beneficiaires of the revenues derived from the gold fields, and he knew that, in spite of the utmost attention and care that could be exercised, those rents and profits were on every occasion when it was possible anticipated by the proper recipients, and that at the end of every period the money which had accrued to the Natives was disposed of by orders to publichouse-keepers and others, for more or less value, in such a way that with an immense revenue, the bénéficiaires of that revenue were often in absolute indigence. Half of the duty of the officer administering the reserves was to accept orders from publichouse-keepers and others in respect to the proceeds, so that when pay-day came the proper beneficiaires were without a shilling. Now,

there was some protection in the law as it stood; but under the law as proposed to be altered by this Bill there would be no protection whatever. The principle—the whole object—of the West Coast Settlement Reserves Act was that the whole benefit to accrue from the reserves should be preserved to the Natives and their descendants; but here they were asked to open the door to abuses, such as he had pointed out, which would undoubtedly lead to the impoverishment of the Natives, and to the abrogation of the object for which provision had been made on their behalf. To his mind this was a fatal objection. He was quite sure that he should be able to satisfy honourable members that this was a provision which ought not for an instant to be allowed to remain in the Bill. It appeared that this was the sole object and purpose of this Bill. It would certainly allow the West Coast hotelkeepers and storekeepers to defeat the object of the provision for the Natives made by past legislation. He would not say more. He felt very much more strongly on it than he should choose to express himself. He was not blaming the Government in this matter. They were in circumstances of very peculiar difficulty. They came into office when the session was very nearly over, and it would have been utterly impossible for men, with even the best intentions in the world, to master the mass of business forced on them in this way. He did not think it was right that honourable members, at this late period of the session, should have forced on them measures of this kind --- important measures, as to which the Government themselves could not by any possibility have any sufficient knowledge. He was therefore not blaming the Government; but he thought they ought to be exceedingly care-ful in accepting this Bill. The Council had over and over again recorded its protest against important measures being forced on them at the end of the session. Every Government carefully withheld till the last days of the session a number of important Bills; then the Standing Orders were suspended at the request of the Government, and thus the usual opportunity for the due consideration of measures was taken from them, and in this instance they were asked to pass a measure of a kind affect ing very greatly the interests of the Natives of the colony, without any adequate consideration whatever. He hoped the Bill would not be read a second time, but, if it passed that stage, he should pay considerable attention to it in Committee.

The Hon. Captain FRASER said, if ever i Bill ought to be translated into Maori before being read a second time, this was one; and as it had not been translated, he would move the adjournment of the debate till Tuesday.

The Hon. J. C. RICHMOND said the Hon Dr. Pollen had stated the position of the Go vernment in regard to these matters very fairly and he hoped the honourable gentleman on the Government bench would not take it amiss i the Council carried the motion for adjourn mont.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY said he was | prepared to agree to the adjournment. Debate adjourned.

Wanganui Harbour

#### WANGANUI HARBOUR BOARD EMPOWERING BILL.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN regretted to find that not a single word had been said in favour of this Bill by those who had spoken on it. On the contrary, every speaker found something to say against it. The Hon. Mr. Miller, the Chairman of Local Bills Committee B, had stated the case pretty clearly, and in accordance with what had taken place before the Committee, although the honourable gentleman omitted something. But he could not say that the Hon. Mr. Oliver and the Hon. Mr. McLean had stated the case in accordance with what came to the notice of the Committee. He could hardly understand how, when members of a Committee had agreed to the bringing-up of a certain report recommending the passing of the Bill with the proposed amendments of the Committee, those honourable members could, in the Council, oppose the Bill, and vote against their own report. But such was the case with the Hon. Mr. McLean and the Hon. Mr. Oliver. Those honourable gentlemen had omitted a great deal in their statements. For instance, the Hon. Mr. Oliver had said that the works on which the proposed loan of £40,000 was to be spent were new works.

The Hon. Mr. OLIVER.-I said nothing of

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN would accept the honourable gentleman's explanation. The Committee had it in evidence that the work was already commenced, and the 700ft. of training-wall necessary for the work had been finished. It must be remembered therefore that, if these works were stopped now and left incomplete, what was already done would be jeopardized by being exposed to the sea. For that reason it was necessary that the work should be finished and made secure, which could only be done by raising the money and going on with it at once. He regretted that the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse had been misled by what he had heard outside the Council. The honourable gentleman had heard that the Harbour Board had only by a majority of one assented to promoting the Bill, whereas the majority was three—six for and three against. precated such statements, more especially when they came from a gentleman who took such a prominent position in the Council as the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse did. He regretted that the Hon. Dr. Grace had gone so far as to say that this Bill was brought in by trickery. That was an accusation which ought never to be made in the Council. The evidence before the Council proved that the statement was unfounded. The honourable gentleman also assumed the rôle of an engineer, overruling the opinion of professional gentlemen like Sir John Coode, in stating that this work would be of no use, and that no good had been done by the expenditure of that £60,000. Now, the Committee had it in

evidence that the bar, and particularly the river, had been very much improved since this work had begun, and inquiries he had since made corroborated the evidence. Inquiries he had made of seafaring men, and of a member of the other House who was constantly visiting Wanganui, proved that the evidence given to the Committee was correct. Therefore the Hon. Dr. Grace was not accurate in his statement, and the honourable gentleman should not have said he would vote against the Bill because it had been promoted by trickery and nothing else. He hoped the Council would take a different view of the matter. He must say that from the very beginning, when the matter came before the Local Bills Committee, he had observed there was much hostility in regard to it; andhe was willing to be corrected if he was wrong it appeared to him to have been treated more like a party question than a question simply relating to a work recommended by a local body. Therefore he hoped the Council would look into the matter more closely, and find out the rights and wrongs of this case. What evidence had they to justify them in rejecting the Bill? It was true they had the evidence of Mr. Bryce, but even he had acknowledged that part of the causes of complaint which had existed had. been removed by this very Bill, inasmuch as by it the country would be better represented on the Board. The Council had—in his opinion quite uselessly—taken the evidence of the member for Rangitikei, which was needless, because any one who looked at the map could see that the Rangitikei District could not but derive benefit from the improvement of the harbour. But, though the member for Rangitikei admitted that distinctly, he had said that he could not consent to his district being included under the Bill: he admitted that his constituents would benefit by the improvement of the harbour, but said he did not believe it was right they should contribute towards it. It was a matter of great necessity to complete the work, which he had heard would be very useful. And, even after the Bill was passed, the people of the district to be rated, both town and country, would be able to say, by their votes, whether the work should be carried on or not. The Council should not hesitate to pass the Bill. The Committee had it further in evidence that a petition was got up by the opponents of the Bill, but only about seventy had signed it in each county, out of about four hundred ratepayers in each county; so that showed that a majority even of the county ratepayers were in favour of the Bill. With the amendments proposed by the Local Bills Committee the county ratepayers would be far better represented than the townspeople, as they would have far greater voting-power than the ratepayers in the town, the voting-power being according to the amount of property. Everything considered, he hoped the Council would pass the Bill.

The Hon. Captain FRASER said there were so many contradictory statements about this Bill, that one could almost understand the statement of the Hon. Mr. Lahmann that

there was a good deal of party feeling about it. It seemed surrounded with mystery, the more so as a gentleman who had given evidence before the Committee had, he understood, gone back to. Wanganui, and told the people that the Bill was to be thrown out by the Council. He knew very little about the Bill, and should like to know more; and, but for the late period of the session, he would move the further adjournment of the debate till next day.

The Hon. Colonel BRETT had only a few words to say; he would not detain the Council, but would move, That the Bill be read the

second time this day six months.

The Hon. Dr. GRACE, in speaking on the amendment, said the Hon. Mr. Lahmann had entirely misunderstood the position that he (Dr. Grace) had assumed towards this measure, though he had endeavoured to make it abundantly clear. The settled district of Rangitikei had been left out of liability to rating under the Act, and that must have been done knowingly and intentionally. The imports and exports of that county must go through the Port of Wanganui, and yet it had been specifically left out, and therefore he argued it had been left out intentionally. He wished to make it clear why this had been The Harbour Board had received a very large endowment of land, upon the basis of which wealth it proceeded with works, and had expended £60,000 in river works, which he alleged from his experience to have resulted in no good. It was now considered advisable to go on with works where any one who knew anything about it knew that the improvements ought to have been made—at the Heads. The wastefulness and extravagance that had hitherto been displayed by the Board in relation to this work had been so great, judging by its results, that the country districts were afraid to submit themselves to rating under the Bill; and, if the various districts which would be benefited by the improvement of the harbour were subjected to the rating, there could be no doubt the country districts would have an overwhelming voting-power, and the result would be, either the rate would not be voted for, or, if voted for, the works would be so carefully overlooked that there would be no more wastefulness and extravagance. It was an unde-niable fact that the County of Rangitikei was largely interested in the Port of Wanganui, and that it had been left out of the rating area. Assuming this had been done unintentionally, then it was clear that the mistake should be rectified; but its omission appeared to him not to have been unintentional. The administration of the affairs of the County of Rangitikei was so economical, and settlers there worked so well together for the common interest, that if the district were included under the Bill the Harbour Board would be subjected to the strictest possible supervision, and it would be made impossible for it to carry on these works in the interests of Wanganui Town, adversely to the interests of the country districts. That was the reason the area had been so limited. The result, if the Bill was carried, would be

that, when the Legislature had fully awakened to the fact that the County of Rangitikei had been specifically exempted from taxation, a Bill would be brought in rendering the county liable to the rate, because a district interested in the work could not be exempted, when other districts only equally interested in it were held liable for the rate. The Local Bills Committee had specifically reported that, in their opinion, the County of Rangitikei ought to be rated under the Bill, and took the Speaker ruling as to whether they could recommend that; the Speaker ruling that, as the county had not had sufficient notice, it ought not to be done. The Hon. Mr. Waterhouse had proposed that authority should be given to the Governor in Council to establish rating districts under this Act; and the Hon. Mr. McLean, who was on the Committee, had distinctly stated that this money was not imperatively necessary, and that the work now in process of construc-tion would not necessarily suffer from any delay. It was intended by the present con-tract to run the wall out 700ft; and the portion already constructed would not be injured in the meantime. The matter should not be hurried on. As a matter of fact, the feeling in the Counties of Waitotara and Wanganui was strong against the measure; it would be difficult to get the rate carried, and, if the County of Rangitikei had been included, it would be still more difficult. He only desired what was fair and reasonable; he had no party or personal feeling in the matter; and, though it might seem strange to honoursble members, it was a fact that he did not know whether his property was in the District of Wanganui or the Rangitikei District, and he did not know it because he did not pay the rates himself. If the Council wished for the Bill he would make no further difficulty, but he was sure the result would be that, as soon as the money was borrowed, Parliament would submit the County of Rangitikei to the rating, though, very unfairly, it would prove never to have been consulted regarding it in the first instance.

The Hon. Sir G. S. WHITMORE really thought that this matter had been threshed out before. The County of Rangitikei had unfortunately been left out of the rating district: he said "unfortunately" in spite of the insinuations an honourable gentleman had made. The honourable gentleman had said that the County of Rangitikei was so well settled, and had such influence, that it could successfully oppose the proposal, and probably would do so. and that it had therefore been left out of the rating area. But that was really not the case Any person who had any knowledge of the district knew that the part it was proposed to include by no means held a large portion of the population, nor, so far as he was aware, were the people there more influential than, or anything like so numerous as, those in the other two counties. The honourable gentleman had said something about one hundred thou-sand acres of endowment; but, if his memory had served him better, he would have known

Hon. Captain Fraser

that it was not more than half that. The Hon. Dr. Grace had also said that the river works were no good. He (Sir G. S. Whit-more) did not affect to be, as that honourable gentleman might be, and possibly was, a marine engineer; but he knew this: that these works had been approved by the highest engineering authority we had had in the colony—that Sir John Coode fully approved of the plan that was being followed. What had been done had very greatly improved the river, and he (Sir G. S. Whitmore) had not the slightest doubt that when the larger work was carried out it would be a greater success. So far as he could under-stand the remarks of the Hon. Dr. Grace, that honourable gentleman wished the Council to understand that the interest of the Town of Wanganui was supreme in this matter, and that the country districts would be at a disadvantage. Well, there was no question that the two country districts were far more influential than the Town of Wanganui, and under the principle of voting proposed to be adopted they would be something like two to one. If it was found that a majority, such a majority as was prescribed, wished to have the work, why should they not? There was not the slightest reason why people should not pay rates if they chose. As they asked nothing from the colony but leave to spend their own money in their own way, what possible harm could there be in the proposal? He admitted that the County of Rangitikei might legitimately have been asked to join; but he would point out that, when the trainway that was in course of construction was completed, Foxton would be the outlet for Rangitikei, and not Wanganui; and it was because that work was known to be near completion that they were not pressed to come under the rating area. The real fact was that the part of the Rangitikei County proposed to be brought in by the Local Bills Committee which proposal, on a superficial view, might seem fair and reasonable—was excluded because it was thought that the residents would urge that they were more interested in that part of Foxton. The Hon. Dr. Grace had said he was not interested, and had repeated the remark three or four times; and he (Sir G. S. Whitmore) could not help thinking of the saying, "Qui s'excuse s'accuse." It was no doubt true that the honourable gentleman's affairs there were conducted by a manager; but he could not help thinking that if they did not put so much weight upon their own interests in these matters it would strengthen their arguments. The statement that this was a matter of surprise he would answer by stating that publication had been made exactly under the prescribed forms, ample opportunity afforded for considering it, and that, with the exception of one gentleman who was unfortunate in his election contest, there had been no remonstrance from the people of Wanganui. people of Wanganui were prepared to pay interest on these moneys by rates, and in such a case the Council might be sure they were in earnest. Then, under the Bill the people had full right of veto if they were dissatisfied. If

they had been misinformed about the willingness of the people, they would know it by the veto that would be put on the proposal. He trusted that honourable gentlemen would not refuse to read so reasonable a Bill a second time. Where the colony had been asked to make enormous sacrifices, he had, on some occasions, thought it his duty to vote against the proposal; but, in a case of this kind, where the people merely asked to be allowed to put their hands in their own pockets, he thought there was no reason why they should not do so; and he thought it would be unreasonable to say, because they had not included a portion of a neighbouring county in the rating area, they should not be allowed themselves to pay for money they wanted for their own harbour.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN would like to say a few words in reply to the Hon. Mr. Lahmann, who had credited some of the remarks he (Mr. McLean) had made to the Hon. Mr. Oliver, and some of the Hon. Mr. Oliver's remarks to him (Mr. McLean). The honourable gentleman was wrong in saying that he (Mr. McLean) had said that the works now being carried on would stand any risk of being damaged if extended to the point to which the contract had been taken. So far, the work was only going 600ft. or 700ft., and was in shallow water, and therefore not endangered. Then, the honourable gentleman said he could not understand people voting to bring down the Bill from the Local Bills Committee and voting against it now. For his part, he had voted to have it before them. He would like to see the experiment tried, as he did not think it could do any harm; but his honourable friend was wrong in saying they should not refuse to read the Bill the second time, for it was the ordinary course to pass or reject a Bill on its second reading. He was sure that those on the Committee would acquit him of having any party feeling on the question. As to what the Hon. Colonel Whitmore had said regarding the fact that the people of Wanganui made no protest against it, it was true that the towns people had said nothing against it; but the members of the County Council of Waito-tara were unanimously against it, and all but one of the members of the Wanganui County Council were against it. The member for Rangitikei had admitted that a portion of the County of Rangitikei should be included in the rating area, and said that if the Bill did not pass he would, on his return, use his influence to get them to agree to go into the rating district, as he was in favour of the works, which he regarded as an experiment. Of course, if the rating area was widened, the rates on the people would be lighter; but it was to be observed that town people were always anxious for expenditure, and were ready to spend as much money as they were allowed to spend. He did not care which way the Bill went.

The Hon. Colonel BRETT asked permission of the Council to withdraw his amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON thought that, in the

debate, several errors had been made which should be set right. The Hon. Colonel Brett said that the walls extended 70ft., while their length was 700ft. The Hon. Mr. McLean, he thought, was also wrong in contradicting him in the abrupt manner he had done. He could only speak upon information he had received, but he believed certain difficulties would be experienced unless the work was carried to completion. Then, the works had already been productive of benefit, for there was now as much as 14ft. of water where there had been only 3ft. or 4ft., and it was hoped the depth would be still further improved. So much had been said about the County of Rangitikei that he did not desire to dwell upon it; but he thought it was not strange that the residents there should not be anxious to be rated, and he believed that Foxton would be the proper outlet for the larger portion of the district when the tramway was completed. He hoped the Council would not hastily prevent the Bill going further. If the amendments proposed in Committee were reasonable he would not oppose them, but he considered that it would be hard if the people who had done all that the law required should be refused the opportunity of going on with this work.

The Council divided on the question, "That

the Bill be now read a second time."

AYES, 22. Baillie Hart Peacock Henderson Barnicoat Peter Bonar Johnston, J. Pollen Reynolds Brandon Lahmann Buckley, P. A. Martin Scotland Campbell Miller Whitmore Dignan Nurse Wilson. Fraser

Noes, 5.

Brett Grace Chamberlin McLean

Oliver.

Majority for, 17.

Bill read a second time.

The Council adjourned at five minutes past nine o'clock p.m.

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Friday, 31st October, 1884.

First Readings—Third Reading—Waipahi-Roxburgh
Liue—Woodville Post and Telegraph Office—
Seaward Bush Railway—Maorewhenua Miners—
Lake Country Railway—To Mairahoe—Manukau
Heads Lights—Brunnerton Resident Magistrate's
Court—Licensing Committees' Clerks—Christchurch-Hokitika Road—Napler-Woodville Railway—Park's Island Quarantine Buildings—Government Contractors—Waimate Relief Works
—Cylinder Castings—Railway Employés—Lyell
Bridgs—Ngatirahiri Lands—Hokitika Telephone
—Castlerock Freestone—West Wanganui Land—
Greymouth Telephone—Westport Colliery Company—Cox's Creek Bridge—McCarthy's Case—
Westland Education District Subdivision Bill—
Consolidated Stock Bill.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PPAYERS.

Hon. Mr. Wilson

FIRST READINGS.
Property-Tax Bill, New Zealand Loan Bill.

THIRD READING. Beet-root Sugar Bill.

WAIPAHI-ROXBURGH LINE:

Mr. PYKE asked the Minister for Public Works, If it is the intention of the Government to place a sum on the supplementary public works estimates for the formation of the Crookston section of the Waipahi – Roxburgh Railway-kine? He believed that for this section detailed working surveys and plans had been made, and he did not wish the Minister for Public Works to understand from the form in which the question had been put that he thought the line should stop at the end of this section. On the contrary, he thought that the whole line should be completed as soon as possible.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said that it was not the intention of the Government to put a sum on the supplementary estimates for this purpose; but that the question of extension of the line would be considered during the recess, and a further vote asked for next session.

# WOODVILLE POST AND TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

Mr. SMITH asked the Postmaster-General, If he will have an addition made to the Woodville Post and Telegraph Office, so as to provide a much-needed additional public accommodation?

Mr. STOUT replied that, when the railwaystation was erected at Woodville, suitable accommodation in connection with it would be provided for postal and telegraph work.

SEAWARD BUSH RAILWAY.

Mr. G. F. RICHARDSON asked the Minister for Public Works, If he will, during the recess. cause a preliminary survey to be made of the Seaward Bush Railway-line, from Oteramika to Mataura, and thence to its ultimate junction with the Catlin's River Railway, and a report to be prepared for the information of this House of the extent and character of the agricultural and forest lands which will be rendered accessible by the line? He had reason to believe that, if the Government caused a survey of this line to be made, the result would show that, on business principles, the railway ought to be constructed. The total length would be about sixty miles, of which forty-six miles would pass through Crown land of good quality, suitable for small settlers. Another advantage of the line would be that it would give access to the special settlement advocated by the honourable member for Port Chalmers. If the Crown land were enhanced in value to the extent of 10s. per acre for ten miles on each side of the railway, such enhanced value would pay for the cost of construction.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON was sorry to say he could not give a favourable answer. At all events, the Government could not have the

survey made during next recess.

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## MAEREWHENUA MINERS

Mr. DUNCAN asked the Minister of Mines, If the Government will remove the disability to which the Maerewhenua miners are subjected through the riparian-right question? Through the riparian rights claimed by the owners of the land, who had bought frontages to the river, a very valuable gold field was left unworkable. That had been the case for many years, and in 1882 and 1883 he asked the Government to take the matter in hand. The reply was that they would deal with the matter; but they seemed to have "kept the matter steadily in view," and he hoped the present Government would act. It would be a great benefit to the settlers there if the men could be employed in the neighbourhood in the winter-time. These diggings were likely to last for years, and the unemployed would not be heard of in future in that district.

Mr. BALLANCE said the Government would be only too glad to remove the difficulty if they saw any means of doing so. He recognized that this was a question of very great import-ance, which had been agitated for some years; and he quite sympathized with the honourable member in his want of success in the past. Up to the present the Government had not had time to consider the question; but during the recess they would do so, with a view of bringing down a measure next session, and perhaps the honourable gentleman would be good enough to make suggestions as to the

shape the measure should take.

#### LAKE COUNTRY RAILWAY.

Mr. DUNCAN asked the Minister for Public Works, If he will, during the recess, cause a survey to be made of the line of railway up the Waitaki to the Lake country, and a report of the quality and quantity of the land to be settled upon on each side of such route, and whether the same facilities would be extended to a company to form such line as are now given to the East and West Coast Railway Company of the Middle Island? The extension of this railway for thirty-two or thirty-three miles would open up a very large and fertile district. Formerly it was supposed that the country was too high to grow anything; but that delusion was now dispelled, and it was proved that the land would grow turnips and grain of all sorts. There were 50,000 acres ready for the plough along the first thirty miles, and a little further on to the north there were another 50,000 acres of fertile land to be opened. The line altogether would open up 640,000 acres of land belonging to the Crown; and, in addition, there were 100,000 acres belonging to the local bodies, such as Harbour Boards, and education endowment; so that he thought this was a line which should be considered.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said that, if the honourable gentleman would be satisfied with a flying survey, he might perhaps be able to give an answer in the affirmative; but, if he wanted a survey of any practical use, he (Mr. Richardson) was sure the department would not be able to undertake it during the recess.

Regarding the latter part of the question, no propositions of any sort had reached the Government from any company, and during the short time they had been in office they had not been able to ascertain whether there was any Crown land immediately fronting on the route this line would take. If a company made a proposal to the Government the Government would give the matter their consideration.

Mr. DUNCAN said there would be no difficulty in making a survey, as the railway ran alongside a river the whole way, and a man on horseback could make a survey in half a day.

#### TE MAIRAHOE.

Mr. DUNCAN asked the Minister of Lands and Native Affairs, If he will cause sufficient land to be set aside for Te Mairahoe and his people in some suitable locality? This chief and his people were the only Natives in the South Island who had been left out in the cold. He had made frequent applications to be placed in a position to have land of his own to keep himself and his people; and, when they saw the immense areas held by Europeans in the South Island, which they had acquired from the Natives for a mere nothing, and considered the state of the Natives in the South Island, surely they ought to make reserves for the support of these people, and so settle a troublesome difficulty.

Mr. BALLANCE said he was informed by the Commissioner of Native Reserves that Te Mairahoe and his people had land to settle on, if they chose to return to it; but he did not know whether the land was sufficient in quantity or quality. He was told that the Natives laid claim to a very large portion of the Middle Island. The honourable gentleman would see that, unless those Natives withdrew their extravagant claims to land to which they had no right whatever, it was quite impossible for the Government to deal with the question. He could make no promise, but, if the Natives sent in a reasonable application for lands to be

set apart, he would give it consideration.

Mr. MACANDREW said that years ago he endeavoured to get this question settled, and at that time, he believed, if a very small reserve at Lake Wanaka had been given to these Natives, it would have settled the whole difficulty, and he thought that should be done now.

#### MANUKAU HEADS LIGHTS.

Mr. HAMLIN asked the Commissioner of Customs, Whether, in view of the recent application of the Northern Shipping Company to have guiding lights placed at the Manukau Heads, he will notify the determination of the Government on the subject to the company as soon as he can conveniently do so? He might explain that, when a Committee sat in 1883, the acting manager of this company, very much to the surprise of the Committee and the officers of the company's vessels, was somewhat adverse to placing guiding-lights at the Heads; but immediately upon the return of the managing director, who was himself a captain of very great experience, he wrote as follows: "

done.

regret that he should have replied in the strain he did, which is so entirely adverse to the opinion of all the master-mariners in our employ upon that coast." The managing director had requested him (Mr. Hamlin) to "endeavour to secure the lights for the purpose for which they were asked—namely, the safety of small vessels crossing the bar at night." When he last asked a question in the House relative to these lights, the Colonial Treasurer read an extract from a report by the Harbourmaster at the Manukau, stating that in the day-time two vessels had touched on the bar going in. He must say that the Harbourmaster had not stated the whole question fairly; otherwise he would have stated that those vessels were endeavouring to beat in when they touched the bar. So far as steamers were concerned, he was aware that the "Hinemoa," which drew as much water as most steamers trading to that port, often crossed the bar at midnight with perfect safety. The misfortune was that masters of other steamers were not so well acquainted with the port as the master of the "Hinemoa." There was no doubt that if those lights were placed there, so as to enable vessels to enter at night, it would be an inunense boon, not only to shippers of stock, but also to passengers. He hoped the Government would take the matter into serious consideration, and have lights placed there, so that vessels could enter at all hours of the night.

Mr. STOUT said the Government were anxious to do anything they could to give light, but, as the honourable gentleman was aware, the expediency of placing guiding lights here had been questioned. One of the Government steamers was going to the Manukau shortly, and the Government intended to have a special report made on the subject. If it was favourable the proposal would be carried out; but, if unfavourable, of course that would not be

### BRUNNERTON RESIDENT MAGIS-TRATE'S COURT.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Minister of Justice, Whether the Government will take steps to have periodical sittings of the Resident Magistrate's Court held at Brunnerton, where there is a population of about 1,700 inhabitants now resident? A constable was stationed there, and there was an available school-building not used for school purposes; so that there would be no expense, as the Magistrate could travel by rail from Greymouth.

Mr. TOLE replied that the information at his command went to show that there was no immediate necessity for establishing a Court at Brunnerton. But he would make further inquiries, and act accordingly.

#### LICENSING COMMITTEES' CLERKS.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Minister of Justice, Will the Government place a sufficient sum of money on the estimates to pay the salaries of those clerks of the Licensing Committees who have, since their appointment by the Governor, been performing their duties there. If that line were adhered to, it would

Mr. Hamlin

without receiving any salary? This referred to an injustice that appeared to be perpetrated on clerks appointed to the Licensing Committees. Under the Licensing Act the local bodies were not permitted to pay the clerks who were appointed by the Government, and the fees collected were paid into the Consolidated Fund. He maintained that, as a matter of justice, where these clerks were performing a duty under appointment by the Governor, some provision should be made for the payment of their salaries.

Mr. TOLE said the Government did not see their way to paying salaries in these cases in the shape of gratuities. He understood that all the fees went to the local bodies in most cases throughout the colony. He knew that in the large towns they were in the habit of giving some small bonus to these clerks. If he placed a sum on the estimates in one case it would have to be done in all, and there was no knowing what the total would amount to.

Mr. GUINNESS wished to put himself right in regard to one remark made by the honourable gentleman. He said that the fees all went to the local bodies. The license-fees went to them, but the fees collected by these clerks as fees went to the Consolidated Fund. and, as these fees had been increased lately, sufficient revenue ought to be obtained from this source to pay the clerks' salaries.

### CHRISTCHURCH-HOKITIKA ROAD.

Mr. McMILLAN asked the Minister for Public Works, Why the roadmen on the Christchurch - Hokitika Road have not been paid their wages during the last four months; and if the Minister will take steps to have arrears paid up, and to insure punctual payments in future ?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said, with regard to the first part of the question, he might explain that the arrangement had been made to suit the workmen themselves, at their own request. He was not aware of this till the question was put on the Paper. He had given instructions that these wages were to be paid monthly in future, in order to avoid the necessity of the men relying on the storekeepers for accommodation along that road, which was an objectionable course. With regard to what was owing to the men, the back wages would be paid during next week, and arrangements to that effect had been made before notice of this question was given.

#### NAPIER-WOODVILLE RAILWAY.

Mr. ORMOND asked the Minister for Public Works, If he will so alter the direction of the railway-line from Napier via the Gorge as to provide for the railway going from Woodville to Palmerston, instead of from Woodville to Bunnythorpe? He might explain that a vote was taken on the public works estimates for taking the line from Woodville to Bunnythorpe. As the original line was laid out, the junction took place at Bunnythorpe, the West Coast line and the line from Napier joining necessitate the traffic from Napier to Wellington being taken round two sides of a triangle to Palmerston. The Minister for Public Works was aware of this circumstance. He (Mr. Ormond) had been urged by people in his district to bring the matter under the notice of the Government, and he hoped the desired alteration in the direction of the line would be made.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the Government believed there existed a necessity for the alteration of the route, and the matter was now under

consideration.

#### PARK'S ISLAND QUARANTINE BUILD-IŇGS.

Mr. ORMOND asked the Government, If they will provide on the supplementary estimates for making such alterations in the quarantine buildings at Park's Island as will make them available for use in place of the present unsuitable Lunatic Asylum? He was aware that there were some difficulties in the way of the Government giving him any explicit answer on this subject. They knew the circumstances of the case, and he would ask that his request might be complied with in the event of their making such arrangements as were favourable to giving effect to it.

Mr. TOLE said the Government were fully alive to the necessity for further accommodation in regard to this asylum, and they had now under consideration some negotiations whereby further accommodation would be

afforded.

#### GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether some arrangement cannot be made to secure the payment of moneys due to contractors for works executed, without the delay which has occurred in the past?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that he was aware great delay often occurred in making these payments. During the short time he had been in office he had not had time to devise a scheme to obviate this, but the matter was now receiving attention. Payments often took four or five weeks to go through, and he was certain that means could be adopted to prevent this.

#### WAIMATE RELIEF WORKS.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether further temporary employment will be provided for some thirty men discharged from relief works at Waimate two

or three days ago?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that the work of the department on which these men had been engaged was now completed, and the only work the Government could offer them was on the railway works at Little River, whither passes would be given them by train, if applied

#### CYLINDER CASTINGS.

Mr. LEVESTAM asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether he will, with a view to

tions attached to the Wellington-Napier Contract for cylinder castings, and other works of a similar nature, so as to enable local manufacturers to compete for those works: that is to say, will he extend the time in which such works have to be executed, and will he reduce the penalties to a reasonable amount? He had always held the opinion that it was of the utmost importance that they should develop their local industries, and he was of opinion that it was their first duty to find employment for their artisans. With that view he placed the question on the Order Paper. He might also say that he believed the Government were as anxious to do this as he was to see it done; but in this instance they had surrounded the work with such conditions that he thought it was quite impossible for local manufacturers to compete for it. This was a contract for castings for the Wellington and Napier contract, and the work was to be completed in eight weeks. He knew a little about this particular business, and he believed it would be quite impossible for any firm in Wellington, or the three firms of foundrymen united, to execute the work in that time. He was also credibly informed that there was no establishment in New Zealand which could do it in the time. It must be borne in mind that, where it was only foundry work, the manufacturers, if solely engaged in this work, would be debarred from doing fitting work, because, if the foundry stopped, fitting and other business would stop. He would ask the Minister for Public Works whether he would not extend the time to a period more reasonable than eight weeks, and whether he could not see his way to reduce the penalties, which were in this case £25 per week. In making castings of this kind sometimes a "duffer" turned out, and it would be a serious matter to impose a penalty of £25 per week in a contract amounting to from £1,000 to £1,200. He would also ask whether the honourable gentleman would not relax the conditions imposed as to finding bondsmen. It was stated in the specifications that, if the bondsmen named by the tenderer were not approved by the Governor, he should absolutely forfeit the deposit-money. If a tender was not accepted, it appeared to him that the tenderer should not be made to pay a penalty.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the question

referred to a matter of considerable urgency, and the Engineer-in-Chief was led to suppose, by one of the principal foundry firms in Wellington, that the time given in this contract would enable this work to be done. Inquiries had been made since this question was put on the Order Paper, and he had given instruc-tions that morning that the time should be extended. With regard to the second part of the question, this work was of such a nature that he did not feel inclined to relax the conditions attached to this contract. It was a matter of urgency, and the Government considered that the penalty was not too large

under the circumstances.

Mr. LEVESTAM asked whether, in the event encourage local industries, modify the condi- of no tender being accepted, the honourable gentleman would be able to import from England within the time specified.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the honourable gentleman knew perfectly well that he had asked a most ridiculous question.

RAILWAY EMPLOYÉS. Mr. HATCH asked the Minister for Public Works, If the Government have, consequent upon the resolution passed by this House on the 9th September last, made arrangements that the railway employés shall be able to avail themselves of the statutory holidays, the first being near at hand, the 9th proximo; and, if not, will they issue the necessary circular of instructions forthwith?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the Government had not issued any instructions yet under the resolution referred to, but would take the matter into consideration as soon as the session was over. With regard to this particular holiday, it was only a certain proportion of the men who could get away. It was one on which a very large number of railway employés would be required at their work, but arrangements would be made to let them off on other days of the year.

LYELL BRIDGE.

Mr. O'CONOR asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether the Government will have the site for a bridge over the Buller, at Lyell, selected, and specifications prepared, before next session, in order that the work may be proceeded with as soon as possible? The bridge in question was one of very great importance, and he believed that the permanent head of the engineering department had already fixed the site of the bridge, and had prepared some plans.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the honourable gentleman had answered the question for him, because he stated that plans had been prepared and the site fixed upon. If the Government saw their way to go on with the work next session they would do so.

#### NGATIRAHIRI LANDS.

Colonel TRIMBLE asked the Native Minister, Whether his attention has been called to the report of Sir William Fcx, dated 15th January last, recommending that a sum of £4,000 should be applied to fencing and other improvements upon the lands belonging to the Ngatirahiri, as compensation for lands of which they were deprived; and, if so, whether he will take steps for carrying out the views of the West Coast Commissioner? The tribe referred to in the question consisted of loyal Natives, and those persons, owing to some confusion of the times, had their land granted for settle-ment to Europeans. It was found impossible to remove these Europeans from the land, and some concession was considered at the time by persons who had charge of the matter to be necessary. Sir William Fox went very carefully into the whole matter, and reported that something ought to be done. He made a suggestion that £4,000 should be set apart as a fair thing, and he thought this ought not to be

Mr. Levestam

divided amongst the Natives individually, but expended in providing fencing, farming implements, and so on, for their permanent benefit. Nothing, so far, had been done in the matter. There had been various changes in public affairs, which no doubt had kept the matter from being carefully considered. Under the circumstances, he thought it right to put the question standing in his name.

Mr. BALLANČE observed from the papers that Sir William Fox had recommended that a sum of £4,000 should be applied to the purposes referred to by the honourable gentleman. He proposed to look carefully into the matter and make further inquiries during the recess, and come down next session with some definite

proposal on the subject.

#### HOKITIKA TELEPHONE.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Commissioner of Telegraphs, If he will take the necessary steps to have telephonic communication established with the Hokitika Hospital, Hokitika Gaol, Hokitika Asylum, and the residence in the Town of Hokitika of the medical officer in charge of these institutions? These institutions were some distance out of town, and, in case of accidents, the unfortunate sufferers had to wait until a messenger was sent to the doctor, the distance to be traversed being about two miles. There had been several cases of the kind, and that was why the matter had been brought under his attention. The doctor lived in the town, and, as the wires extended past his residence, the only expense would be that of obtaining the instrument, and the cost of connecting the wire.

Sir J. VOGEL replied that there would be no objection to connecting the Hokitika Hospital, Gaol, and Asylum together, but he was unable to say that he was willing to extend the communication to the private residence of the medical man in charge. It would be establishing a precedent which would be inconvenient. The doctor might have the wire taken to his house, and, if the house was not his own, he might remove, and they might be constantly following him from house to house with the telephone. If the medical man was likely to remain in the house for some time, he (Sir J. Vogel) would see what could be done to get the telephone wire extended.

CASTLEROCK FREESTONE.

Mr. COWAN asked the Minister for Public Works, If he will, during the recess, cause a survey to be made of a line of light railway between Winton and Kingston Railway, at Dipton, and the deposit of freestone on Crown lands at Castlerock, with the view of having the probable cost of same ascertained? He had been led to ask this question in consequence of a petition which he had the honour to present from a considerable number of residents at Dipton, in the County of Southland, asking that this particular survey should be made. The Waste Lands Committee reported that, as this was a matter for the Executive Government to deal with, it should be referred to them

for their consideration. He would read the report which had been obtained from the Public Works Department on the subject:—

"Public Works, Wellington, N.Z., "13th October, 1884.

"Sir,-In reply to your letter of the 26th nltimo, enclosing a petition from residents at Dipton relative to the construction of a tramway between the Winton and Kingston Railway and the Castlerock deposit of limestone, and requesting a report thereon, I have the honour to forward the subjoined copy of a memorandum from the Assistant Engineer-in-Chief upon the subject, for the information of the Committee.—I have, &c.,
"C: Y. O'CONNOR,

"Under-Secretary for Public Works. "The Chairman, Waste Lands Committee,

"House of Representatives.

"'Memorandum. - The stone is a very good one. It belongs to the same class as the Oamaru stone, but is heavier and far less porous. It is probably one of the best free-stones in the Middle Island. Beyond the Beyond the bridging of the Oreti there would be no difficulty in making a railway or tramway to the stone, the country being quite flat. Had the original line of the Winton and Kingston Railway been adhered to it would have run quite close to the stone.—W. N. BLAIR."

The particular deposit of freestone at Castlerock was of a very valuable character, having obtained a first prize at the Sydney Exhibition, as also at Melbourne; and, from that point of view, he trusted the request he had now made would be favourably considered by the Minister

for Public Works.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON believed that the deposit of freestone was of much importance. But there was no necessity for making the survey asked for, as the country was very level, and when the Kingston Railway was originally made it had been laid out to go in the direction referred to, and a flying survey was then made.

#### WEST WANGANUI LAND.

Mr. HOLMES asked the Government, If it is true that the late Ministry, of which Mr. Rolleston was Minister of Lands, allowed a syndicate in Wellington, of whom his colleague was one, to buy a large tract of Maori land in the Middle Island, extending from West Wanganui Inlet to the Turimawiwi River, and which land is of an auriferous character, and a portion of which was a proclaimed gold field? In order that the Government might be able to answer this question satisfactorily, it would be necessary for him to give a few facts. It seemed that in the Middle Island, in the Provincial District of Nelson, on the seaboard, there was a large tract of Maori land, which he believed was a reserve, and had been pro-claimed a gold-field district. It extended from West Wanganui Inlet to the Turimawiwi River, and contained something like 89,000 acres of land. The land was of a highly-auriferous character: it contained various minerals, and especially a large gold field. It seemed that in 1879 some Wellington speculators in Maori land

cast a covetous eye upon this piece of land, and brought influence to bear upon the Government with a view to getting possession of it. The Government made inquiries as to the value of the land, and Mr. Mackay, the Native Lands Frauds Commissioner, reported to the Government in 1879-as he (Mr. Holmes) was informed-that this land was of a very valuable character. That opinion had been borne out by the Maoris, who stated that the land was highly auriferous and contained several valuable gold fields. That report was supported by the report of Mr. Cox, who also described the land as being highly That gentleman's report could be auriferous. seen in the Museum at Wellington. It seemed that last year, or this year—he was unable to tell which-certain speculators-friends, as he would show, of the late Minister of Mines, the present member for Geraldine—were allowed by the Government to negotiate for the purchase of this land. The land was passed through the Native Land Court; and the Minister of Mines, who ought to have protected the interests of the people, never in any way interfered. He had no representative there, and these lands were allowed to go to these persons for about 2s. 6d. an acre. They were described as of a highlyvaluable character, and some of them would be leased by persons to invest in gold-mining industries at not less than £1 per acre per annum. These lands, as he understood, had now been sold, without any protest on the part of the late Minister of Mines, to a company. He could not himself vouch for the correctness of this statement, but he had been told by a gentleman living in Wellington, a highly-reputable character, that one of the persons composing that syndicate was a colleague of the late Minister of Mines; another was a member of the House, and a strong supporter of the late Minister of Mines; and the third was a gentleman who was now in the Upper House, and who was placed in that Chamber by a Government of which the late Minister of Mines was a member, or his son. If those facts were true and the late Minister of Mines would have an opportunity of replying—they might be described, not as high-handed plunder, but in words much stronger than those.

Mr. BALLANCE replied that the information which the honourable gentleman had given to the House did not seem to involve all that the question would appear to imply. There was no evidence in the department that the late Minister of Mines had any negotiations with a syndicate to obtain this Maori land in the Middle Island. The position of the question, so far as he could make out, was simply this: The Collingwood County Council sent up a request to the Native Department that it should purchase this Native reserve, which appeared to them to be of a suitable character for settle-In 1879 the Native Minister called upon the Commissioner of Native Reserves, Mr. Alexander Mackay, to furnish him with a report. The Commissioner furnished the report a very lengthy one—going into great details, and into the question of the value of the land. The extent of the reserve was more than 100,000

from the department saying that it was re served from sale by the Natives in 1855. Major ATKINSON.—It never was a Native

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reserve.

Mr. BALLANCE said that it was spoken of throughout the papers as a Native reserve; but, as he had told the House, there had never been any restriction upon it, and the Natives had power to alienate it without the approval of the Government.

Sir G. GREY thought it would be found that the reserve was granted in 1851, that it was subsequently marked off, and that it was in-

alienable.

Mr. BRYCE would state what his impression was with respect to this piece of land. He believed it was simply a block of land which had not been sold, and the term "reserve" could only be applied to it because the Maons had reserved it from sale. The position was, as far as his impression went, that the land was simply Native land, and that it passed through the Court without any restriction being placed He might point out that his late upon it. colleague had really no voice in the matter, and could not interfere in any way.

acres, and the Commissioner represented it as rugged and unfit for settlement—that only a comparatively small amount of this land would be suitable for settlement. But he said, on the other hand, that, from a mineral point of view, it was a reserve of a most valuable character. It was stated that some people seemed to be anxious to obtain the reserve; and the Commissioner, in his report, said he could only understand by it that they were anxious to dispossess the Maori owners of all that was valuable. Upon that, no further action seemed to have been taken by the department; but in the present year the sale was allowed. It was passed on the 27th October, 1884, by the Commissioner. The matter seemed to have been completed on the 9th June, 1884. The agreement which was made by the purchaser was made on the 8th July, 1884, and it was witnessed before Mr. C. J. Johnston, J.P. ostensible purchaser was Mr. Alfred de Bathe Brandon, junior. There was no indication of a syndicate: on the face of the papers, that person seemed to have been the purchaser. He paid £10,000. The Commissioner certified that, in his opinion, that was a fair amount to pay for the reserve. The papers had passed through the department, and Mr. Alfred de Bathe Brandon, junior, had become the possessor of the reserve of 89,000 acres. These were, broadly, the facts that appeared on the face of the

West Wanganui Land.

Sir G. GREY.—What was the nature of the reserve? How did it come to be reserved?

Mr. BALLANCE understood that there was no restriction on the reserve, which was made many years ago, and it appeared to have been the subject of a good deal of correspondence.

Sir G. GREY .- What is the date of its being made a reserve?

Mr. BALLANCE had no doubt that would appear among the papers; but it was a very long time ago, and it would take some time to find it out. The Natives, however, appeared to have power to dispose of the reserve, with the consent of the Frauds Commissioner. was no restriction on it, and consequently the Government were not called upon to interfere in the matter. The report by the Commissioner was furnished in November, 1879. He might state, further, that he found from the papers that the late Sir Donald McLean took a great deal of interest in the reserve, and sums had been voted out of the funds of the Native Department for the purpose of making roads for its improvement.

Mr. MONTGOMERY. - Is that the same Commissioner who spoke of the great value of the reserve?

Mr. BALLANCE.—Yes; the same.

Sir G. GREY would ask the Minister of Lands to state to the House the nature of the reserve, and the way in which it had been granted. He had reason to believe that it was a reserve which was inalienable, and that it was probably made or promised in 1853, and laid off in 1856.

Mr. Ballance

#### GREYMOUTH TELEPHONE.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Commissioner of Customs, If he will take the necessary steps to have telephonic communication established between the Greymouth Hospital and the residence of the medical officer in charge; also, if he will take steps to have telephonic communication established between the residence of the Harbourmaster at Greymouth and the signal-station at the Grey bar? With regard. to the first part of the question, he need only point out that it would be a great convenience to have the residence of the medical officer connected with the hospital in case of his services being suddenly required. With regard to the second part of the question, he might say that the distance from the Harbourmaster's office on the wharf to the signal-station was about a mile, and it was very desirable to know the state of the bar, and also to give directions what signals should be sent to vessels in the roadstead. At present, if the Harbourmaster was attending to his duties at the wharf, he had to go a distance of a mile to get the information and give directions, and that entailed a considerable loss of time.

Sir J. VOGEL said, with regard to the first part of the question, he would have to ascer tain, first, what the distance was between the hospital and the residence of the medical man With regard to the second, he felt incline to carry out the connection suggested by th

honourable gentleman.

WESTPORT COLLIERY COMPANY. Mr. GUINNESS asked the Government Whether they will take any steps to set asid the sale to the Westport Colliery Company 150 acres of land at Wallsend, Grey River?

Mr. BALLANCE replied that it was not th Mr. BALLANCE said he had a memorandum this matter. The Government could not set

aside an agreement which had been made by their predecessors, and they considered that this was a matter which could only be dealt

with by the House itself.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Sir, the reply given to this question, taken in connection with what occurred yesterday, seems to me of sufficient importance to warrant me in moving the adjournment of the House in order that I may make a personal explanation, and I shall accordingly close my remarks with a motion to that effect. The Minister of Lands has just stated that it is not the intention of the Government to set aside the sale of this land to the Westport Colliery Company; and that was the answer which I expected him to give, for I do not see that he could give any other. Then he went on to say that it would be for the House to take what action it chose in the matter. Well, it will be time enough to consider that question when it comes before us. But this question was dealt with yesterday in a manner of which I think I have some reason to complain. Three Ministers devoted their attention to me as the late Minister of Lands, and I felt in a somewhat prominent position, as being an individual whom it took three Ministers to attack. These three gentlemen followed one another in their several capacities, and endeavoured to make me out, in the eyes of this House and of the country, a delinquent of a very dark dye. I have too much confidence in the House to imagine that such an impression would be left on it; but there was certainly an attempt to make me out a person of that description in the eyes of the public.

Mr. BALLANCE.—I did not allude to the

honourable gentleman.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Oh, no. There were three Ministers besides the honourable gentleman. I have nothing to complain of in the bonourable gentleman's action with regard to myself. Following me in the department, he has always spoken as a Minister who felt the sesponsibility of his position, and in no way can I complain of him. He takes the information which is furnished him by the department, and he does not lower himself by going outside to rake up information in order to condemn a political opponent by misrepresenting facts. I am not going to say anything about him that need cause him the least perplexity in mind. First of all, we had the Treasurer - no, the Premier—there is some doubt as to which is the leading mind of the two, but we will take the Premier first. He said I had done a very illegal action, and he laid down the law on that point. As I said, I am not at all prepared to contest the legal question with him; but, so far as I know, I have acted in accordance with the law, and have done nothing at all outside it. The honourable member, I suppose, was not aware of the 9th clause of the Westland and Nelson Coal Fields Administration Act, which gives absolute power, wisely or unwisely, to the Minister to consolidate coal-mining leases; and it also provides that ---

"Every lessee of a coal-mining lease may,

with the consent in writing of the Minister of Lands first had and obtained, assign, underlet,. or otherwise part with the possession of the demised premises or any part thereof, or his. estate or interest therein, notwithstanding there shall be contained in any such lease, or in any Act or ordinance under which such lease shall have been granted, any provision to the contrary, and no other consent whatsoever shall be requisite."

Mr. STOUT.—That does not touch the law at all.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—I am not going to bandy law with the honourable gentleman. He always laughs when he is wrong. Clauses 9, 10, and 11 give all the required power to the Land Board and the Minister. Well, Sir, what I want to say is that the honourable gentleman went on to say that I should have made known to Parliament—to both branches of the Legislature—the course I had taken. That was meant for wit on his part. He meant that to allude to what I had said as to the course that ought to be taken with reference to the district railways. He meant that for a joke. But his argument was that I had acted wrongly in connection with this business because I had not brought the matter before Parliament. Then I come to the Minister for Public Works. He very seldom gets up; he very seldom says anything anybody can hear, and what we can hear has very often no very definite meaning. He took up the printed lease of the Wallsend Coal Mine, which had been laid upon the table of the House, and he quoted it to show that the late Minister of Lands had acted very improperly in making a grant under the lease to this company at all.
Mr. STOUT.—No.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Yes. The Premier will have his opportunity of speaking when he gets. up, and I have no doubt he will make as many mistakes as usual. The Minister for Public Works took up the lease, and read it to show that I had acted wrongly in giving any land to this company at all till the last five years.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—No.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Honourable gentlemen. will bear me out that that was the impression made on the House.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—I read the lease.

Mr. ROLLESTON. - Yes; the honourable gentleman read the lease, and said very little. He read the lease to show what were the rights,. and said that according to the lease I was absolutely wrong in having done what I had done. He also told us that he was Minister at the time the lease was made, and that he had put that clause in to prevent the company getting undue advantages from the terms. of the lease—in fact, to prevent their getting a pre-emptive right: I do not use the word in its technical sense, but that was the argument of the honourable gentleman.

Mr. STOUT.-No.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—I beg that the Premier will not interrupt. He must wait for a few minutes. That was the argument of the Minis-ter for Public Works. There was no great

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amount of argument, but he simply read out the lease to show that I was absolutely wrong. And now I come to the great man of the Ministry himself. "Oh," thought the honourable gentleman, "here is a chance. I have found out the honourable member for Geraldine, and I will expose him to the House." "I need only remind the honourable gentleman," said he, "that he had a colleague connected with the Westport Colliery, and that he committed a gross job." I believe the honourable gentleman had in his mind the district railways, and a guilty conscience prompted the word. He said he need only remind me that I had a colleague interested in this undertaking, and hinted that I had done an illegal act which would benefit that colleague. If he had stated that plainly, we should have known what he meant: there would have been something plucky, something straightforward, in that. But he would not say positively that I had done a corrupt act knowing it to be illegal. He led the House to believe, by insinuation, that I was mixed up in an iniquitous transaction.

Sir J. VOGEL.—Will the honourable gentle-

man allow me?

Mr. ROLLESTON.—No; I do not choose to give way. Having done that, the honourable gentleman went on to pat me on the back. "He did not think the hohourable gentleman had been wilfully guilty of this crime. Oh, no! He did not wish to accuse me of that; all that I had been guilty of was gross carelessness, and he would look over what I had done." That was the general tenor of the honourable gentleman's remarks; and then he said no doubt I had taken the advice of the department, and the department was of course wrong. The honourable gentleman is fond of making hits at the departments. He has in the House several times thrown out these unwarranted insinuations against departments of the Government. For my own part I can say, of the department with which I have been connected, that I am proud to have been connected with it, and the advice given to me was, I am sure, given in the public interest. I am not above acting on the advice of a department; but I on all occasions, including this, was guided by my own judgment as to how far the advice was right or wrong in itself. Then, again, it was said by him that the alienation of this land was authorized just as the Ministry were going out of office. I was amazed that he should make such a statement, because the papers were on the table at the time, and these papers showed most distinctly that the whole transaction was completed, except so far as the technical part of it was concerned, months before the Government left office. I think it was done in the month of October or November. Certainly it was done at a later time than the end of the year when I undertook to make the transfer of this land upon certain conditions. Now I will deal with these questions seriatim. First of all, with regard to the question of Parliament not being aware of what was going on with regard to these lands. I will not take up time by reading Hansard;

Mr. Rolleston

but I have here volumes of *Hansard* for 1883 marked, which any one may see, and any one who looks at the places I have marked will see that the whole question was brought up by the predecessor of the present member for Greymouth, and by the Hon. Mr. Lahmann in the Upper House, and there will be found stated the intentions of the Government with regard to the transference of this lease.

Mr. STOUT. - It is the sale that is com-

plained of.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—I am coming to that Do not be in a hurry. The lease involved sale of a portion of the land. The transfer of the lease was well known to Parliament from the commencement, and the sale also. I enforced conditions, before I agreed to the transfer, which would insure the mine being carried on, and these conditions were in such a form as appeared likely to insure the working of the mine.

Mr. SEDDON.—The mine was not worked. Mr. ROLLESTON. - Firedamp and water had to be fought with,—difficulties which K company could foresee,—and these caused the stoppage of work; and then the Government had to deal with the thing from the point of view of common-sense and common justica The fact was this: that these people had paid-actually paid, as far as the statement of the department went—£20,000 for the transfer of the lease. They had determined to go into extra work, and, as a matter of fact, before the sale of the land, they had spent some £15,000 in opening out the mine. Evidence of this was before me, and it is also in these documents now on the table of the House; and k tell me that a man in the position of a Minis ter is to ignore exertions of that kind—is to say, because they had not complied with the letter of the agreement as to the actual output of coal, that he would oust them out of a undertaking of that kind—is to my mind ridi culous; and that is the view taken by a Com mittee of this House in regard to another case in which the lessees are to have an extension of lease despite default, because they had contend with difficulties which they could no foresee, and which were such as to warrant con sideration outside the technicalities of the law I say I acted in accordance with the provision of the Westland and Nelson Coal Fields Ad ministration Act, and I am willing to accept responsibility for the manner in which m functions were exercised. So much for th I now come to the Minister fo Public Works. Now, his position was rathe good, and I hope the House will attend to this He was Minister when the lease was executed his name is upon the lease, and he says h carefully considered the lease, and put this pr vision in it in order to secure the public from any neglect on the part of the lesses to wor the land in terms of their lesse.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—I said just the reverse: that it was to protect the lessees them selves, and that they should be able to secure their own works.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—But the question was

Was it done largely in advance of the proper time? The point was, whether I had done wrong in allowing this during the first five years, instead of during the last five years, of the lease.

Mr. STOUT.—It was not done in the first

five years or the last five years.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—That is the point I am coming to. We are not in a Court of law, and, if the honourable gentleman will be quiet, I will make it perfectly plain before I have done. The question was, whether I wrongly allowed the purchase to be made before the commencement of the last five years of the term. will it be believed that a Government of which the present Treasurer was a member, and of which the present Minister for Public Works was also a member, almost before the ink was dry upon this lease, made an agreement with the lessees to allow them to purchase, and promised to grant them, during the first five rears instead of the last five years, the fifty were on which the township stands? All improvements were to be protected, and the land us to be granted to the company. Now, was the fair thing to say what the Minister for Public Works said yesterday without any ex-rustion? This is a report upon the whole respection furnished to the Minister of Mines atae 3rd August, 1883, by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, who was also agent for the frown in respect of the lands under the Nelson and Westland Coal Fields Administration Act.

"In the lease to the Greymouth Coal Company, which the Westport Coal Company have sgreed to purchase, and have applied to the linister of Lands to sanction the assignment of as required by 'The Westland and Nelson Coal Fields Administration Act, 1877,' there is a provision that the lessees may purchase durmy the last five years of the term any portion d the leasehold not exceeding 150 acres. the year 1875 the Greymouth Company applied to be allowed to purchase an additional fifty tiwnship for their workmen. The Government refused to sanction the purchase of an additional area, but agreed to allow the immediate election of fifty acres out of the 150 mentioned in the lease, and to issue a Crown grant for the ame at the end of the first five years of the term of the lease, provided the price agreed pon-viz., £5 per acre-was paid. The Company thereupon at once selected a site, and surveyed the township known as 'Wallsend.' They then proceeded to let the sections by public auction, the area of the sections averaging about from 22 to 24 perches each, and the annual rental £5 for the first twenty-one years, with a right of renewal at double rent. Notwithstanding the very high rent fixed, about twenty leases were sold, chiefly to miners, who were told that they would get constant employment at the mine, and, as they assert, would be allowed to acquire the freehold in a short time. Not long after this the works at the mine were stopped; the men had to look for work eisewhere; and the company failed to complete

the special arrangement made with the Government for the purchase of the fifty acres. comprising the township. The lessees of the township therefore complain that the company have not kept faith with them. Then followsthe recommendation of the Government Agent that the Government should either take over the township and sell or lease the town sections, or that they should call upon the Westport Company to purchase the freehold of the township at once, and either sell or lease to the occupiers or lessees the allotments that were built upon, at rents not exceeding £2 10s. per annum per section, with a right of renewal at the same rent; and he says that there can be no question as to the bona fides of the company, and that he sees no reason why the lease should not be transferred."

That is the recommendation that came tome from the officer who inquired into the matter. There were grave complaints, and, I think, just complaints, that the payments were too high. I sent down an officer to inquire into the whole transaction and report what was best to be done. The remainder of his report shows this: There was no doubt the company had not strictly fulfilled the letter of the lease, and the Government was in a position to make fresh stipulations. I did make fresh stipulations, in the interest of those lessees—as the honourable member for Greymouth knows—so that they should not be charged more than £2 10s. per annum a section. We had to give and take, to come to a fair arrangement. The question was this. Whether the lease, with the promised power of purchase, should be assigned; and what was done by the Government was perfectly fair and aboveboard, and the House was perfectly Those people spent large sums aware of it. of money to open up the mine; and, when the question came up of granting this land, it had been provided for in the original lease by the present Minister for Public Works, and the Government could not, in honour, get out of the engagement, even if it were advisable to do so, which gave the company this right to the land all around their works, and to buy the township for their workmen. That was what was done. It was agreed upon that they should have this township; and that right went, as a matter of fact, from one to the other, if you agree to assign the lease at all. I say, deliberately, that the Government did right in giving an assignment of that lease, that I had power to do so under the law, and that it was a wise and proper thing to do. The Government of which I was a member insisted from day to day on the fulfilment of the contract to the utmost, and if you asked the company they would tell you that I went further than that; and the whole course of the transaction shows anything but a desire to favour the company at the expense of the public. The question whether it was to be fifty acres or one hundred and fifty acres is immaterial. If you gave them five acres of freehold commanding the mouth of the pit, the whole thing was done. The fifty acres comprised the whole

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township, the whole flat; and the rest is simply | I may tell him that I have not the slighte grazing land for the cows and goats of those people, and, so far as we know, there is no coal under it to any extent. The original lease gives the absolute power of purchasing the whole 150 acres before the termination of the lease in the last five years, and they had that right inherently in the original agreement. I do not like to pay much attention to the Colonial Treasurer. I am sure he is very sorry for what he said-

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Sir J. VOGEL.-Not in the least.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—I am sure he must be, by this time. He went out of his way to make a very nasty insinuation—nothing less; a very nasty and unwarranted insinuation. That is nasty and unwarranted insinuation. what I have to say to him. I was neither guilty of carelessness nor guilty of corruption; nor did I do anything at all that I would not I have not the papers before me. do again. The Minister of Lands courteously said he would let me have them; but I suppose he has forgotten. But I am certain, from the papers laid on the table, that there is nothing in the whole transaction that any Committee of this House would not at once confirm. I say the Colonial Treasurer acted most unwarrantably in the insinuations he threw cut. He is constantly trying to browbeat this House. must recollect that, if he is an old member of this House, I am too. His character, and my character! I am not at all afraid of anything he says doing me harm. He is one of those, as I said the other day, who live in glass houses. Any of my transactions with companies are perfectly open to the world, and will bear criticism. I have never mixed up public and private business. I had no transactions with companies privately when I was dealing with them pubficly, and my whole career is such that I am quite satisfied that anything the honourable gentleman may say to cast a reflection on the honesty of my administration is absolutely without foundation; and he will find that, in this House, sneering and abuse, browbeating and vulgar intimidation, will have no effect.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I think these last words must not be allowed to pass. The words "vulgar intimidation" are not parliamentary

**lan**guage.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Of course I bow to your ruling, Sir, and withdraw the words; but it seems to me that the course taken amounts to

Mr. SPEAKER.—I do not think that is an apology. It must be an apology to the House, not to the member to whom the words are When unparliamentary language is offered. used within these walls, the words must be absolutely withdrawn, in respect to the House.

Mr. ROLLESTON .- I absolutely withdraw the words, and regret that I made use of them; but I hope that, in making the apology to the House, they will bear in mind that I had great provocation, and was accused of corruption and improper conduct.

Sir J. VOGEL.—Perhaps it may be as well that I should first deal with the honourable member for Geraldine. In the first instance,

degree of regret for what I said yesterday. gave him a very useful lesson, and one whic he seems to a great extent to have taken theart; and it would be desirable if he further took it to heart. The honourable gentleman quite correct in saying he is an old member and I am an old member; and that fact can back to me in a forcible manner when the honourable gentleman got up to-day, as he h done on former occasions, and, introducing in his voice a lachrymose tone, led us to su pose that he is a very superior being sufferir under grievances. New members no doul felt his appeal to the pathetic side of the characters; but upon honourable members we accustomed to it, who know exactly the sty of the honourable gentleman, it has no effect Now, what I said to the honourable gentle man yesterday was a lesson to him, and hope he will take it to heart. The honou able gentleman is in the habit of speakir as if he were a superior being as compare with other members, and of throwing or vile insinuations against honourable member while, at the same time, he implies that h himself is cast in such a superior mould the he is quite beyond the ordinary weakness ( mankind. Now, Sir, what I said to him yet terday was this: "This is a useful lesson will read to you, and I hope you will take it i heart.'' During the session the honourable gentleman has been casting most unwarrant able insinuations against me especially, and against other honourable members of this House. On one occasion he indulged in most coarse attack upon me, of which I too no notice, but treated it with silent contempt It was beneath contempt, in fact. He als spoke about "red-handed plunder," and so or I said to him yesterday, "Let me teach you lesson in charity. If anybody wished to tak a leaf out of your book, see how easy it is t Here is a colleague ( do so on occasions. yours interested in this mine, and it appear that you have done a very irregular thing. Le this be a warning to you not to be so ready t throw out innuendoes." At the same time I qualified my observations by saying that did not suppose the honourable gentlems had been guilty of corruption, but only carelessness. I told him that he ought, i the future, to be more careful not to car aspersions against other honourable gentle men, as he was in the habit of doing, an to remember how easily similar charges coul be made against himself. Taking what the honourable gentleman says now, I understant in the first instance, he reminded me that I was in the Ministry at the time referee to. I was at Home in 1875, but I was in th Ministry, and accept every responsibility for what was done by my colleagues, especially the honourable member for Egmont, who was also in the Government at the same time. Well so far as I understand the honourable gentle man, the position is this: The Governmenthen weakly conceded to the lessees the right to have fifty acres during the first five years

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their carrying out certain undertakings and giving employment to miners upon the land. and I understand that, those gentlemen—the lessees—having failed to carry out their contract, the honourable gentleman, acting in accordance with the homocopathic principle similia similibus curantur, thought he had better give them another hundred acres to encourage them further not to carry out their contract. I am prepared to say and to believe that he acted in good faith. No doubt he acted under a mistaken notion, because what he did do was the means of shutting up the mine. We have the evidence of honourable members on the spot, who know that was the effect of it. This fifty acres has enabled the owners of the mine to relax the conditions under which they took the mine, and to leave it unworked.

Mr. ROLLESTON.-No, no. Sir J. VOGEL.—Now, Sir, as regards the konourable gentleman himself, and his assumption of superiority over me. I ask, what public service can he show that he has rendered to the colony? I should like to know that. Yet he is a distinguished man. I will introduce him to the House. Place, place, for the honourthe gentleman, the head of the New Zealand branch of the distinguished Barnacle family, which has its ramifications throughout the United Kingdom and the colonies. As a Barmacle, he has no superior in the colony-none whatever. It is well known what he is. He has always been in the Government service, and he will live in the Government service, and he will be miserable and unhappy as long as he is not in the Government service. He is always saying that the colony is going to ruin when he is not drawing Government pay. I am quite aware that the honourable gentleman poses as a settler and colonist, and all that sort of thing. We know what he is; shle gentleman has outlived the affection of every community in the colony that, from time to time, has taken him up and endeawoured to support him. As to his colonist and settler pretensions, I heard a very good story, but I do not know that I shall be able to tell it as well as it was related to me; it is an old anecdote. I have heard that it struck the konourable gentleman that it would increase his importance in the country if he came forth in the shape of a farmer and settler. On those occasions when he was in Christchurch and its neighbourhood, especially on market-days, he found that it was a common practice for farmers to carry about samples with them of cats and wheat and barley, to show what they could produce, and so on. Well, it struck the bonourable gentleman that that was the right thing to do; and so he went to a friend, and that friend supplied him with three papers one containing oats, one containing wheat, and one containing barley; and the honourable gentleman next appeared on the scene in an attire which partook of the country squire and the farm-labourer. It was a picturesque

attire, in which he looked very well, and was

instead of the last five years, conditionally on | very much admired. "Samples of wheat, oats, and barley!" said he, "I should like to see if you can beat these." But his friend, unfortunately, had not written upon the samples what they were; and when the honourable gentleman came to produce them he could not tell which was the wheat, which the cats, and which the barley. That is a very good illustration of the honourable gentleman; but I have no doubt that, since then, he has acquired the capacity, which a well-bred horse possesses, of distinguishing good oats from bad. But, as to the honourable gentleman's public career, I think that the country has treated him very well indeed, and that he has been fortunate in having been so long in its service. With regard to myself, I have done services to the country which I think the colony will recollect not only while I am alive, but after I am gone; and, as to the accusations of the honourable gentleman that I came back to the colony to get office, I say that they are utterly unfounded. Why should I want office? Am I in a condition to want office? Who would venture to predict that I shall be alive next session? I came back to the colony with no idea of taking office. I took office because I found the colony in such a miserable condition, brought on by the policy and conduct of the honourable gentleman and his colleagues, that I thought I might be the means of bringing it once more into a good condition. There has been no real reason why during the past five years it should have been in this condition-no reason except that the Government in office during that time have, in a timorous spirit, wholly abandoned the colonizing policy which the colony had embarked in. I have taken up that policy again. Once more confidence is, to a great extent, reinstated in the colony. My honourable colleague the Minister for Public Works stated in the House the other evening what we intend to do in the matter of railways, and in proceeding with that colonizing policy which was abandoned by the late Go-vernment. We have taken up that policy again, and it has obtained favour in this House and in the colony. It would be a happy thing for me personally if I ceased to hold office to-day. I am holding office, not at my own desire, but against my own interest, and at a very large personal sacrifice; but I am doing it because, when I came back to New Zealand, it pained me to see the colony in such a position as it was in, knowing as I did that there was no necessity for it. If things had gone on as they had been going for a few months longer, if that want of confidence had continued to exist, a catastrophe would have overtaken the colony. The foundation of all commercial transactions in a colony like this is the value of real property; but the late Government had so industriously impaired the confidence of people in the value of real property that it ceased to have a convertible value, and had that feeling continued it would be impossible to exaggerate the seriousness of the disaster that would have fallen upon the colony. That was the primary condition of affairs which

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I found existing, and that was the condition which the honourable gentleman has done his best to bring about. I have no desire to institute a comparison between myself and the honourable member. I am quite content to leave that comparison to others, and not only to those who live in the colony now, but, when he and I are cold in our graves, I venture to hope I shall not be forgotten so soon as he will be. I am sorry to have troubled the House with this personal matter.

Mr. STOUT .-- I am sorry that the honourable member for Geraldine should, in his temper, have misrepresented what I said the other day. He will see what appears in Hansard. All I said was that the honourable gentleman had done an illegal action, and that, having done an illegal action, he ought to have come to Parliament and obtained parliamentary sanction. Now, the honourable gentleman tried to day to avoid the point in dispute, and talked continually about transference of leases. There has been no question of transferring leases, or of allowing it. That was not the question put to the Minister of Lands in a former session. The question now is as to the selling of 150 acres of land. In a former session the following were the question and answer about the Wallsend leases:

"Mr. Petrie asked the Minister of Mines,—(1.) If he will take the necessary steps to at once compel the proprietors of the Wallsend Coal Company to work their mine in conformity with the provisions of their lease? (2.) If, in the event of their refusing to comply with such instructions, he will cancel the lease, and thus enable the residents of the district to step in

and profitably work the mine?

"Mr. Rolleston replied that the Wallsend Colliery Company had applied for permission to transfer to the Westport Colliery Company their rights in this mine. As the honourable gentleman was aware, the terms of the lease held by the Wallsend Coal Company had not been complied with. The Government had declined to allow the transfer until the Westport Colliery Company had proved their bona fides by prosecuting the work of the mine for six months. If that was not definitely gone about the whole arrangement would be at an end, and the Government would then take steps to throw the mine open for competition. The conditions would be strict as to maintaining the mine free of water, and as to the output of coal, so as to secure the utilization of the property."

That was on the 8th September, 1882. That was not done. It has not been done up to the present time.

Mr. ROLLESTON .- Yes, it has.

Mr. STOUT.—Does the honourable member mean to say that there has been an output of coal there in accordance with the terms of the lease? Nothing of the sort. My honourable colleague the Minister of Lands had to say he had to further extend the terms—that the lease had not been complied with. The answer given in the Legislative Council was shorter, but to the same effect. But, Sir, this question

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of transferring the lease had nothing to do with The question was as to the sale the question. of 150 acres of land. How does the honourable member defend that sale? Yesterday he led the House to believe that it was in the lease. My honourable colleague the Minister for Public Works got up and said there was nothing in the lease about purchasing during the first five years, but during the last five years, of the term. That was the reason that was given. Now, instead of relying on the lease, the honourable gentleman wishes to rely on an agreement, the terms of which he has not quoted, giving this site for a township. In that he is entirely wrong. I have before me the memorandum put on the papers as to the terms of this contract, which did not amount to fifty acres, only to thirty-two, and it was to be given only if they had complied with the terms of the lease-and it was not mentioned in the lease. Does the honourable member admit that? If so, then it was an agreement outside the lease; it was not embodied in the lease; and the member responsible for it was not the present Minister for Public Works. He was merely carrying out the suggestion of the then Superintendent of Westland, Mr. Bonar. He is not responsible for this grant of the township site. Even in that matter the honourable member is incorrect. What was the legal position? It was this - and, if the opinion of the Solicitor - General has been taken, I should like to see it. I should like to see the opinion of even any layman who would say that there was any legality in this action. This was the position of the matter: There was a promise given to the Westport Colliery Company that, in five years after they had performed the terms of the lease, they should have the right to purchase fifty acres out of the 150 acres. They did not perform the terms of the lease. Hence they were not entitled to a single acre of land under this written agreement. It is not in the lease. And what does the honourable member do? Knowing that they were not entitled to a single acre of land, he, in violation of the terms of the lease, and, I say, in violation of the law, gives them 150 acres, -fifty acres being the outside quantity they had any claim to obtain, and that only during the last five years of the lease. I go further than that. The fifty acres, the extent mentioned in the lease, was only to be given if their plant was on the land. There was to be no land granted if there were not workings on the land. That appears on the face of the lease itself, so that the grant of the 150 acres could not be made unless they had workings on the land, and it was to be given to them to preserve their works. The reason given on the face of the papers why it was put the last five years of the lease was that, if they failed to comply with the terms of the lease, another company might not be prevented from coming in and working the mine. The honourable member, to show the legality of the action taken, quoted section 9 of the Westland and Nelson Coal Fields Act, as being that which gave authority to sell the land before the term



provided for in the lease, and contrary to the terms of the lease. Now, there is not a word about "sale" in the whole of the 9th section. All it says is this:-

"Every lease of the said land heretofore or hereafter to be granted for coal-mining purposes may be extended to or granted for any term not exceeding ninety-nine years, to take effect in possession and not in reversion. such leases may, with the consent in writing of the Minister of Lands, be amalgamated or consolidated with other coal-mining leases of such

"Every lessee of a coal-mining lease may, with the consent in writing of the Minister of Lands first had and obtained, assign, underlet, or otherwise part with the possession of the demised premises or any part thereof, or his estate or interest therein, notwithstanding there shall be contained in any such lease, or in any Act or ordinance under which such lease shall have been granted, any provision to the contrary, and no other consent whatsoever shall be requisite."

There is not a word about the sale in this section at all. Why did the honourable gentleman cite this section? I could understand man cite this section? I could understand him quoting it as proof of power to transfer the lease, but not to sell the land. What I complain of is, that the honourable member went outside the law—that he did what I say was a most dangerous thing for any Minister to do. Suppose, in the case of a pastoral lease, there was a covenant to the effect that the person holding the lease should be entitled, under certain conditions, to acquire the preemption, what would be said if the Minister of Lands set that lease aside, set the law sside, and allowed it to be purchased, although the conditions had not been complied with? Would not that be considered a very high-handed proceeding? As I said yesterday, if there were circumstances that warranted any concession to be given to the Westport Colliery Company, then it was his bounden duty to have come to the House, to have stated the circumstances, and to have applied for an Act to confer upon him the power to do as he has done; but he has chosen, from carelessness or wilfully, to set aside the terms of the lease, and to sell the land, which he had no authority to sell either by virtue of the Act he quoted from or by the lease. I think it is a pity the honourable member, before he gets up and makes charges against myself and others of having misstated facts, should not himself have perused the report, as he is apparently wholly ignorant of the facts of the case. I ask him to read the lease, and he will see that the right of purchase of the land only extended to a purchase of land on which buildings were erected, and that it was only to be exercised during the last five years of the currency of the lease. Both these pro-visions were set aside. And there was more than that. The right to purchase the landfifty acres up to a hundred and fifty acrescould only accrue to those tenants when the terms of the lease had been complied with.

I will not quarrel with the honourable member for not having insisted upon compliance with the strict letter of the law-for saying, "We will not forfeit your lease; we will not take any advantage of you by any forfeiting of your lease." But he said, "We will not only not forfeit your lease, but we will give you concessions "-concessions which, by the terms of the lease, even if they had been complied with, they could not have demanded. That seems to me to be a very peculiar method of land ad-

Company.

Major ATKINSON.—I must say a few words, —not in regard to this particular question, but in answer to what fell from the Colonial Treasurer. I cannot permit him to assume that he can, with a wave of his wand, restore this country to great prosperity. I tell him that he is not going to restore the country to prosperity by the action he has already taken, and the action he proposes to take in reference to a Bill we are to consider directly. I say such action will not tend in any way to restore the country to a condition of activity and prosperity, but will sink it far deeper in the mire than it has ever been before.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The honourable member is not at liberty to refer to anything that is on

the Paper for consideration.

Major ATKINSON.—I will only refer to the honourable gentleman's remarks. I apologize to the House for having made reference to this Bill we are to consider presently, and which is one of the remedies the honourable gentleman is proposing, and which is to restore confidence confidence that he tells us is already coming The honourable gentleman has done nothing to restore confidence up to the present time. The action he has taken will not restore confidence; it will only end in greater disaster than has ever come upon this colony. He is continually assuming these airs, and saying he has done this thing for the colony and has done something else for the colony. Why could he not have left that matter alone until we came to discuss his measure? I will not allow him to make these statements without contradicting them on every occasion on which they are made. I am very proud to have belonged to a Government of which the late Minister of Lands was a member. Any man might be proud to have had such a colleague. I venture to say that, when the careers of the two gentlemen come to be looked at by the country, as they will presently, that of my honourable friend the late Minister of Lands will not stand second to that of the honourable gentle-

An Hon. MEMBER. - That is a matter of

opinion.

Major ATKINSON.—It is a matter of opinion. By all means, let those honourable members who think differently enjoy their opinion, as I claim to enjoy mine. We have had it—and we have had it before from the honourable gentleman—that the late Minister of Lands has derived great benefit from having been in the service of the country - that he Here the terms had not been complied with. owes the country a great debt of gratitude.

What does the Treasurer mean by attacking the honourable member in the way he does? as though he had not himself received a great deal more from the country than he has ever given it. I confess that I cannot express my feelings that any honourable gentleman on those benches should have given utterance to the statement the honourable gentleman enttered this afternoon about the great family of "Barnacles." Is that a proper remark to come from the Treasurer? There are honourable gentlemen in this House of whom such a remark would no doubt be quite true.

Hon. MEMBERS.—Hear, hear. Major ATKINSON.—They believe it; I wish them joy of that belief. They are a class to which, I am thankful to say, the majority of this House do not belong. I venture to think that there are hardly any public men who have been members of this House—certainly none that I have known—who have sat on those benches who have not sacrificed infinitely more than they have got from the colony. I say, if any honourable gentlemen—those who have large businesses and who can sneer at gentlemen who give up their time—if ever they are called upon to give up their business year after year to serve on those benches, they will leave them infinitely poorer men, if wiser and better. I venture to say that the Colonial Treasurer, or any honourable member who has sat on the Ministerial benches, has sacrificed much to the country. I do not doubt that he is sacrificing much now; and I would ask him to extend what he knows to be true in his own case to other gentlemen who have given disinterested service to the public, and such service as my honourable friend on my left (Mr. Rolleston) has given. Now, what I ask is, what has the honourable gentleman opposite done to restore confidence? He tells us that the late Government was going to bring the country, or had brought the country, to the brink of a great catastrophe—that, if Providence had not so willed it that that honourable gentleman was paying a visit to this country at the time, that catastrophe would have happened to us. Sir, can any one in this House who has had any knowledge of affairs believe such a statement? I deny it, and any one who believes it is not possessed of that knowledge.

An Hon. MEMBER.—The country believes it. Major ATKINSON.—The country may believe it; God help the country, if it does. the country is to be raised out of a state of depression by the remedies that those honourable gentlemen are proposing—if these are the means — I say the country will get into the deepest and darkest state of depression it has ever yet seen. Then, the honourable gentleman tells us that we are to get out of these difficulties by believing that our land is worth a great deal more than it is.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I never said so.

Major ATKINSON.—No, the honourable gentleman did not say so: that is perfectly true; but that is what he told us in spirit, and been enforced. It is now some six or seven I will show how. He told us that the very years since that mine has been worked as a

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foundation of the prosperity of the country rests upon the value of the landed estate of the colony-the freehold estate of the colony.

Sir J. VOGEL.-No; I said they had a con-

vertible value.

Major ATKINSON.—They have a convertible value. Well, it is the same thing. What is the use of saying this? In all the action he has taken since he has been on those benches he has been endeavouring to mislead the country: all the action he has been taking in this direction of prosperity has been to show that land-agricultural land especially-throughout the colony, which is only worth £4 or £5 an acre, is worth £15 or £20 an acre. Now, Sir, that is the policy of the honourable gentleman, and I say that the curse of this country has not been the undervaluing of the land, but the overvaluing of the land. I say, until we recognize the broad fact that land is only worth what it will actually produce—until we recognize that fact, and buy and sell in the light of that fact, so long shall we be in the difficulties that we are in now. I say that the whole policy of the honourable gentleman is leading us away from that; it is an endeavour to give a fictitious value to the land—not to give to the land its right value. The difficulty from which we are suffering has arisen almost solely from land having been bought and sold at much above its value—at much more than would give a fair interest and pay the mortgagee at the same time. It is from that all our difficulty has arisen. The object of the honourable gentleman is not to relieve us from our mortgages, but to raise the land to a high value again, so that we may borrow further. The whole policy is that, as I will show presently. I will not trouble the House with it now, and would not have said a word on the present occasion; but I could not allow the honourable gentleman to sit there and make claims to which he has not the smallest right, and I take this opportunity of warning the country that it is being led on into a path that will end in nothing but disaster.

Mr. SEDDON.—I cannot allow the remarks of the last speaker to go unchallenged, and I do not think, from what has fallen from him, that he has much reason to be proud of his late colleague. I may tell him that the late Minister of Lands was the cause of the downfall of the Atkinson Ministry; and he himself thinks that, because, when he formed another Ministry, he took good care to leave the honourable member for Geraldine outside of it. The sale of this land may appear to honourable gentlemen a very simple question, but I can tell them at once that to those who live where the land is situated it is one of very serious I remember that in 1882 the then moment. Minister of Lands—the honourable member for Geraldine—was asked a question by the late member for Greymouth, and the answer was, "I shall strictly enforce the conditions of the lease." Well, from that time to the present moment the conditions of the lease have not been enforced. It is now some six or seven

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coal mine—that is, by putting out the coal in the ordinary way, or in accordance with the conditions of the lease. The miners who had taken up these sections of land were prevented having work provided for them according to They brought the conditions of the lease. pressure to bear on the then member for Greymouth, and they also invoked the assistance of the Hon. Mr. Lahmann, who comes from that part of the country, and who is a member of the Legislative Council. The Hon. Captain Fraser, also a member of the Legislative Council, likewise moved in the matter. The pressure then brought to bear on the Minister of Lands led him to give the answer which is to be found in Hansard of the 8th September, 1882; and I would call attention to one part of that answer, in which he says that he would take care to see that the output of coal was maintained. Now, as a matter of fact, that output of coal was not maintained from the time of the lease to the selling of the land. The company found it necessary to sink another shaft, and, upon their assuring the honourable gentleman that they would sink it, he abrogated for a time the clause of the lease in regard to the output of coal. The company then commenced to sink the shaft, but for six or eight months prior to the sale of the land they knocked off sinking it. That was brought under the notice of the late Minister of Mines, at the commencement of last session, by a telegram from the late member for Greymouth, which was the result of a public meeting. The part of the lease to which I allude, with regard to the output of coal, reads as follows:-

"The said lessees, their successors or assigns, shall and will raise and get from the said mincs, and have ready for sale and delivery, during the first year from the date of these presents, at least two thousand tons of consumable coal, and during the second year at least five thousand tons of such coal, and during the third year and each and every subsequent year of the said term of twenty-one years at least fifteen thousand tons of such coal, Im-

perial measure." It is impossible, on the remaining portion of the land which is leased, to enforce that condition. I at once admit that the company had serious difficulties to contend with in the sinking of the shaft, and also that their capital was limited; and if the Minister had taken up the attitude of saying, "I will not ruin the company by compelling it to comply strictly with the lease," I should not have a word to say with regard to the action of the Minister. But there is another phase of the question. The late Minister of Lands said this was done to premote settlement. How does he promote settlement by selling this land? Has he put it as a condition of the sale that they must lease it at a limited price to the people?

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Yes.
Mr. SEDDON.—But what is the price? Two pounds ten shillings per section of an

eighth of an acre rental per annum for land which he has sold at £5 an acre. Does he

company, and shutting up the mine, so that the men who have built their homes on these sections have not means of subsistence so that they can remain there? Those men must remain without occupation until the company sees fit to recommence working the mine. Then, there is another phase of the question, which has never been touched upon yet, and that is the increased value given to the land This land is the only site for the terminus of the East and West Coast Railway, if that railway should ever be made. Knowing that that line must be sooner or later carried out, what provision has there been made for a site for the terminus? There was permission under the terms of the lease to take the land, but now the fee-simple of the land has been given, and if the Government wish to acquire it they will have to purchase it under the Public Works Act. I say the settlers there have been very badly treated, and they are the people who have a right to complain. I stigmatized this transaction as a little job the other day, and honourable members took exception to my using the term, but to-day we have heard the Treasurer's action with regard to the district railways spoken of as a gross job. I say that those who are interested in this matter look upon the sale of this land as one of the greatest mistakes that ever a Ministry made. not use a stronger term. I also say to my honourable friend the member for Geraldine that, when he is posing here as a benefactor to the whole country, his administration not only with regard to lands, but also with re-gard to mines, has been a curse, and that he is execrated by every miner throughout the length and breadth of New Zealand. There is not a mining constituency throughout the colony in which there are a dozen men who would vote for him. We know how, year after year, he has held up his claims upon the Canterbury District; and yet what has been his reward? That he has been obliged to pack up his political swag and walk off to another constituency. If his past services had been valued as he claims that they are, would he have had to leave Avon and go to Geraldine? He should have borne that in mind, when he went from house to house begging for votes. I do not think the honourable member for Christchurch North has had to do that; I do not believe there is a constituency in New Zealand which would not be proud to have him for its representative, and he has had requisi-tions from all parts of the colony asking him to stand. But has the honourable member for Geraldine had these requisitions? Where have his services been sought for? Nowhere. He had to go, roll in hand, begging for votes, and saying, "I will be a good boy in the future: forget the past; return me as your representative, and I will promise to do better in the future." If I had been in his place I certainly should not have done as he did, but I would have said, "You may return me if you like;" but I would not have begged for it. I have said that the honourable gentleman was promote settlement by selling the land to the | not much thought of by the miners, and I may

add that he is known amongst them not as the Minister for Mines, but the Minister against Mines. I can show him where he has been spoken of in that way both in the North and in the South. When beneficial services are rendered to the miners they are a generous class of men, and they would have given him credit for past services; but, taking this House as a reflex of the opinions of the constitu-encies, there are not more than one or two out of the eighteen gold-fields members who would not vote against the Atkinson Ministry or any other which contained the honourable member for Geraldine as a member. I state that as a positive fact. Then, has he won the confidence of those who follow agricultural pursuits in this House, or who represent agricultural constituencies? The answer is, No; unmistak-Under these circumstances, I fail to ably no. see why he should pose before the House and the country as one of our saviours and as a patriot. I suspected long ago that he was subject to influences not of a character that I should care for. I remember well, and there is documentary proof of it, that, in a certain part of the country—Inangahua—there was a low-level tunnel. The honourable gentleman went to the spot, saw for himself, and im-mediately stopped all works, subsidies, and moneys; alluded to it publicly, and said that it was a work to benefit private companies, and that public money could not be spent for such a purpose. For eighteen months these subsidies were stopped. But suddenly an election took place there; and a candidate—an avowed supporter of my honourable friend—took to the electors, in his carpet-bag, a document stating that if the people would support him the subsidies would be restored.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Absolutely untrue. Mr. SEDDON.—Mr. Shaw stated so—telegraphed the same; and it was proved by affidavit filed in the Supreme Court at Wellington, in the suit Brandon v. Shaw. There was also £200 given to the same gentleman to help him to get returned to this House. There is proof also that an honourable gentleman was called to another place as part of the bargain. And that is the way - the only way - in which a gold-fields constituency could be got to return to this House a gentleman who would sup-port the Government of which the honourable member for Geraldine was a member: by bribery, Sir - corruption of the worst kind; and this lease transaction looks very much as if it was closely allied to the Reefton elec-tion proceedings. This was done on the 7th June, just about the time when the House met, and after the country had declared against the Ministry. It was after Major Atkinson had been down to Christchurch and had received an adverse vote, after he had received an adverse vote at Dunedin, and had escaped one at Auckland simply owing to the courtesy of the meeting. There was no doubt that the Ministry were going out. I was in the lobbies, and a straw will sometimes show how the wind This transaction occurred on the 7th June, and on the 9th June there was this other

transaction in reference to 89,000 acres of land -a very strange coincidence. The honourable member said, in his reply, that the negotiations were commenced in January or February pre-vious to the date of the sale of this Westport land, but there was no conclusion arrived at But was any notice given to the settlers that this transaction was to be carried out? No; they knew nothing of it until they saw a paragraph in the West Coast Times to the effect that, from a statement made by the Commissioner of Waste Lands, it appeared that the company had paid a sum of £750 for 150 acres of land at Wallsend. Did the honourable gentleman even tell the honourable member for Greymouth that this transaction was pending? No; and I should have thought that at least he might have informed the member for the district of it, and consulted him about it. But no; the thing was done so quietly, so privately, that the persons who were most interested in it knew nothing of it; and from that fact alone the transaction does not look well. I will not say that the honourable gentleman has done this corruptly or wilfully; but I do know this: that the thing has been done, and is an irreparable loss to the colony. No one would be more glad than I to see the Westport Colliery Company a profitable con-cern, for its prosperity would be the prosperity of the colony; but the key of the position is now given to the company, instead of being retained in the hands of the Government and this House, which contains the representatives of the people. The honourable member speaks of the power given to the Minister under the Nelson and Westland Coal Fields Administration Act; but the power given there was intended to be used for the benefit of the people of the country, and it has not been so used in this case. When we were discussing the East and West Coast Railway Bill the honourable gentleman was very careful to urge that we should not part with the mineral lands of the Crown; but he knew, at the same time when he was putting on such virtuous indignation—those indignant looks and tones which the honourable member puts on and assumes time after time are only bad acting, though they have weight with some honourable members—I say he must have known, when he was putting on this indignation, that he had parted with 150 acres of the best coal field we have in Westland, which the company may work as they like or leave unworked if they like. The company can throw up the lease if they like. If the Government are too strict in their condi-tions, the company can say, "We have got 150 acres; we have got the only land fit for a township; we have got the land upon which, if this East and West Coast Railway is ever made. the station must be; and, if you are too strict. we will throw up the rest of the lease." The bargain is all in favour of the company, and the people of New Zealand will suffer.

Mr. BRYCE.—Sir, it seems to me that it is a matter for great regret that the Atkinson-Government, instead of retiring at the commencement of this session, did not wait for a

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no-confidence motion to be moved, because then honourable members might have got rid ofwell, what shall I say? -- various grievances which have been brought up from time to time in the debates that have since taken place. This particular debate seems to be a debate of want of confidence in the late Minister of Lands. Now, I am not going to debate the question, but I would simply express my opinion with reference to it in the fewest words, in this way: I never expect to be in office again in this colony, but for the rest of my life one of the most grateful recollections of the time I have been in office will be that of having been associated with a gentleman of such high honour as my honourable friend the late Minister of Lands. No member of a Government ever devoted himself to the duties of his office with more singleness of purpose to promote the public interests. That is my opinion, and I will not say more on that point. Now, I would say one word with reference to the Colonial Treasurer. Almost the only sentiment I have left with regard to him is my great admiration of his capacity. I do not say that by way of flattery, because that is not in my way; but I think he has more all-round capacity than any other man I have ever met with. But what greatly astonishes me is the action of that honourable gentleman in this House. never was a man who so constantly seized every opportunity of nagging, nagging, nagging at his opponents; and I must say the honourable gentleman greatly astonishes me, because I think such conduct is altogether beneath his capacity. Added to this, he indulges in weak wit and weaker jokes. Of course his followers will naturally laugh at the wit, although it is weak. They rather remind me of a story that was told about the Emperor of China and his courtiers. He did not understand a note of music; but when he used to pass from one room to another, where musical instruments were arranged, he occasionally struck the notes, producing a chord, or rather discord, and immediately all his followers would put up their hands and display the most intense admiration. So with the honourable member's followers in regard to his wit. To-day he gave us a seventeenth-century joke, but his followers laughed greatly, though they must have seen the same joke in books a hundred times before. I do not care to say anything worse. The honourable gentleman indulges too much in these attacks. It is not given to mortal man to be wise in all things, and in our admiration for the honourable gentleman's capacity we must forget this weakness. As to the present discussion, I take it that it has had its rise in the vicious attack made from the Government benches yesterday, in the shape of speeches and interjections principally from the Premier. does not know how often he interjects. again and again stated that the land could only be sold during the last five years of the lease; and the Minister for Public Works took up the same line of argument, and, to add force to his argument, read the agreement which bears out that view. But my honourable been lying idle for a great many years: the

friend to-day points out that there was an agreement arrived at to sell the land long before the last five years, long before his time, by the very honourable gentlemen who make the charge against him. The Treasurer said this, or rather meant this: that my honourable friend had done either a corrupt thing or a careless thing; but he gave my honourable friend the benefit of the doubt and said it was carelessness. If it was carelessness, it was carelessness of years before. It was then urged that the conditions of the lease were not fulfilled; but what does that amount to? was a certain output of coal insisted on for? It was to secure a guarantee that these works should be carried on in a bona fide manner; and it is a fact, which has not been disputed, that the company gave good evidence of its good faith by spending a far larger sum of money than would have been sufficient to secure the output under ordinary circum-stances. It would have been absurdly unjust to have said that, because circumstances over which the company had no control had prevented that output, effect was not to be given to the agreement made by a former Minister for Public Works. That is the case, as it appears to me; and it seems to me that, if there is really any corruption or carelessness, these imputations should have been made against a former Minister much more than

against my honourable friend.

Mr. GILLIES.—I ask the House to pardon me for putting in a word on this question, because there has been a good deal said wide of the fact. I do not wish to enter into what

may be termed the political question as between the old Government and the present Government. It is not for me to say anything whatever that would reflect upon the present Government, for I think it would be very much out of place on my part, considering the liberal way in which they have viewed the coal industries of the West Coast; but I cannot sit silent. in my seat and allow any man-I do not care who—to be accused of that which is not fairly his due. It is something altogether extraordinary - something intensely amusing - to me to hear the late Ministry - especially the late Minister of Lands - characterized as he has been for having been favourable to the Westport Coal Company in any shape or form. My life for the last several years has been worried by the fact that the Government had not from the first carried out the agreements which the company had made with them. The Government have been attempting to put upon us disabilities for years which we had no business to be under. That is the attitude they maintained towards us. In this particular matter the facts are these: Some two or three years ago the Westport Coal Company were forced to purchase the Wallsend Grey-mouth lease. They did not wish to buy it, but through the force of circumstances they were compelled to buy it. Afterwards,

mine is full of water right up to the brim. You must prove to us, before we consent to an assignment of the lease, that you are bona fide going to work this mine." We proceeded to do so, and proved that to the satisfaction of the Government. Any one who looks into the question will be fully satisfied that the company did prove their bona fides in the matter. They pumped out the mine—which is about 600ft. deep—at some risk and cost. They commenced a shaft, which is down 160ft.; they sent to England for a large mass of machinery which was necessary; and, altogether, they spent something like £15,000 over and above the £20,000 spent in purchasing the mine. That was the position of the matter about this time last year, when it so happened that, as chairman of the company, I visited the mine. The mine was then just on the point of being in a position to be worked: it was pumped out nearly dry. When I went there I found that if we attempted to work the mine it could only be done at serious risk to human life. serious accident had just occurred, which had been witnessed by many people, who said that a column of fire went up many feet into the air. A great deal of machinery at the pit's mouth was blown away; but, fortunately, no one was injured. The evidence of experts proved that, if they attempted to take coal out of that mine before another shaft was sunk, it would be at the risk of human life. Acting on that information, the directors resolved they would not take out any coal. They could take out a large quantity of coal to-morrow, if necessary. The mine has been pumped and kept dry, and is in very good condition in every way, with the exception of ventilation. Until the other shaft is down there cannot be proper ventilation. Since then other considerations have come in. The want of certain appliances has delayed the sinking of that shaft. I put it to honourable members, as men of common-sense, is there the slightest likelihood of the company stopping work, after paying £20,000 for the mine and spending £15,000 upon it, and after keeping all along a manager and a gang of men to keep it always pumped, with the view of going on with work as soon as the proper appliances have been obtained? Now, with reference to the purchase of the freehold, I have got to say this: The company, in a measure, were forced into that purchase. When the company got the title to the lease made clear, they immediately took steps to clear squatters off their ground; and it must be borne in mind that, in purchasing this lease, the Westport Coal Com-pany bought the right to the fifty acres of free-hold. That was part of the property for which they paid £20,000. For years no end of people had been squatting on the ground—not miners —and when notice to quit was served on them they raised a hue-and-cry about the company not doing what was right. They appealed to the Government, who at once sent down a Commissioner to examine the whole question. The Commissioner made certain recommenda-tions, stating that the people had settled so long on this land that it was not advisable to

turn them off, or to allow the company to deal with them as they had a right to do under the lease. But, as a compromise, he proposed to the Government that we should take up our freehold now, instead of at the end of the lease; and that, in consideration of our doing so, and giving leases at a rental reduced by 50 per cent., the Government should give us an additional 100 acres. After a great deal of consideration, the directors consented to that, although it was most inconvenient to them to do it. If the colony wishes to get back those one hundred acres I think the company will be happy to hand them back, because, as has been said, the possession of five acres of ground, as long as it covers the shaft and buildings, is just as useful to a coal company as fifty or one hundred acres. The surface of the ground that the company has been compelled to take up is of no value. This idea of the railway terminus being upon it is something I never heard of before; and I am glad to hear that the land is likely to be so valuable. But I am afraid this is like a great many other fine esti-mates put on West Coast affairs, which many of us have found so very beautiful outside but very rotten at the heart. However, there can be no question that, as far as good faith is concerned, I can assure my friends on the Government benches that the late Minister of Lands did not do anything whatever in the way of showing favour to the Westport Coal Company when he sold that piece of ground. On the contrary, he has been our strong antagonist all along; and I, for one, have no reason to regret the change of Government, or that men should have come on to those benches who take a more liberal and enlightened view of the industries of the country, and desire to help them on.

Mr. BROWN.—I think the honourable member for Bruce has scarcely put the matter right. He said five acres was quite as good as a larger area to the coal company. He must know that the fifty acres will cover their workings for many years, and the State will lose the amount of royalty, which was the main fea-ture of the agreement and terms on which these lands were held by the company from the Government. Royalty will not now be charged to the coal company. I understand a large amount of money has been spent on those works, a number of people were expected to be employed, and a large output of coal was guaranteed by the company. Therefore, not only in regard to the land itself, which is valuable, but in the working of the mine, an improper advantage has been given to the company. It is rather refreshing to hear the observation of the honourable member for Waitotara, that this would have been better as a vote of want of confidence against the late Government, and to hear him regretting, almost, that the Government, of which he was a member, had retired so early in the session. I consider that the late Government committed a great wrong to the country in not resigning before the House met, according to the constitutional practice. Those honourable

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gentlemen knew well their position after the election, because they took the precaution to have two copies of the speech of every candidate supplied them. Valuable time was lost and public convenience suffered through their

not resigning before the House met.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—It might be expected that I should retort upon the Colonial Treasurer, but I am not going to do any such thing. He stated that his intention yesterday was to read me a useful lesson. I am quite sure that he has had a very useful lesson taught him. He has been taught by this debate that there are members of this House who will not stand constant nagging, constant insinuations, constant sneering and abuse. I have kept myself very quiet; I have said very little; but, in the House and out of the House, in letters to "My dear Mr. Matson," and others, the honourable gentleman has cast insinuations at me and my administration which are perfectly unwarranted by any knowledge that he could have. I have borne a great deal, and I only my this by way of palliation of the strength of expression that I made use of just now. the term I made use of, ought to be substituted "out of taste," probably; and it was the concatenation of those two words that probably made it, as you, Sir, ruled it, offensive. I have no desire to be offensive; but the provocation that I have had for a long series of months since the honourable member has been in the colony seemed to justify it. The Premier seemed to deal somewhat disingenuously with this question. The fact is, the lease, in the first instance, rightly or wrongly, gave the authority to sell, and that power was acted upon by the present Minister for Public Works. It was only a question of the amount of land that should be operated upon. It was not a question of principle; it was a question of detail.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—The first sale was absolutely outside of the lease, and was so specified all through the correspondence.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—The grant of fifty acres

was outside the lease.

The hour of half-past five o'clock having arrived, Mr. SPEAKER left the chair.

## HOUSE RESUMED.

Mr. Speaker resumed the chair at half-past seven o'clock.

#### COX'S CREEK BRIDGE.

Mr. PEACOCK asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether he will obtain a report from the department on the condition of the portion of bridge erected in mid-stream at Cox's Creek, Auckland; and whether it can be shifted further up to a narrower part of the creek, if an

eligible site can be procured?
Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that he would have a report drawn up, and, if the report was a favourable one, the desire of the honourable

gentleman would be given effect to.

McCARTHY'S CASE. Mr. ALLWRIGHT asked what action the

Government intended to take, if any, in connection with the unfortunate man McCarthy, now confined in the Lyttelton Gaol. The facts of this case were fully set forth in the petition. which he handed to the Minister of Justice for presentation to His Excellency the Governor, together with the evidence taken in the Resident Magistrate's Court at Lyttelton. might state that there was a very strong feeling in connection with this matter, and the petitioners were anxious to know what action the Government intended to take.

Mr. TOLE said the petition in this case had been received. An assault of a very serious nature had been committed on the high seas, and he regretted that, in the present state of the law, the Governor had no jurisdiction to interfere in the matter. The Government would send a copy of the petition to the American Consul in New Zealand, asking him to be good. enough to take action in reference to the facts set out in it, so that the justice of the case might be met. He had telegraphed to the American Consul that a copy of the petition would be sent to him. He hoped some speedy action would be taken by that gentleman in reference to this unfortunate case.

### WESTLAND EDUCATION DISTRICT SUBDIVISION BILL.

On the question, That this Bill be read a third time.

Mr. MENTEATH said that a number of honourable gentlemen voted for this Bill in Committee without knowing much about the subject, and they did so under the impression that by their vote they were punishing the authors of what had been, no doubt, a very considerable scandal—an instance of very considerable mismanagement: that by subdividing the District of Westland into two they were merely punishing the authors of the difficulties and troubles that had arisen in connection with the Westland Education District. ventured to say that that was not the real issue to be disposed of in passing this Bill. The real issue was, whether, because certain individuals elected in one year to represent the Education District of Westland mismanaged the affairs of that district, they should, on that account, punish all the children of the Westland Education District by withholding from them the additional facilities which were afforded to children in wealthier and more prosperous districts; and whether they should take money from the funds which were needed in that sparsely-populated country for the support of schools in the outlying districts, and apply it to the support of two Boards of Education, instead of one as heretofore. He thought it would not be necessary for him to adduce any figures or arguments to show that, where they had two machines to do the work of one-where they had two bodies of men engaged in managing and doing the same work—they must necessarily throw away. in paying for those two managing bodies, a considerable portion of the already too scanty funds required for education. They were not

punishing the individuals who created the difficulty; they might be represented on the two Boards: indeed, they were giving those persons a better chance of being elected, because they were now substituting two Boards for one. thought the House might very well pause before taking this step. He did not want to see legislation in any given way. All he asked was that they should suspend legislation until next session. He had no doubt the bitter feelings which had existed between the two centres of the West Coast that caused all the trouble were now subsiding; and, if the matter were allowed to stand over for another year, they would then find that the people in the southern portion of the district would be as anxious as the people in the northern portion of the district to see this proposed subdivision quashed. He did not say anything as to the direction future legislation should take. If this measure had been introduced earlier in the session he should have endeavoured to get another measure passed through; but it was now too late to talk of any further legislation. He thought the House should simply suspend all legislation for this session, and give an indemnity to the Education Department for their management of the district for the last year and a half, and provide for the liabilities which the Board had incurred—remove that part of the scandal, and continue to carry on the department for the next year, as it had been very satisfactorily carried on for the last year and a half by the Central Education Department. If that were done, he had no doubt that next year they would find the people of Hokitika vying with the people of Greymouth in declaring that this House ought not to dissipate their funds by rendering it necessary to maintain two Boards instead of one, but should spend the money in maintaining the schools in the outlying districts-spend it not in management, but in the true purpose for which our educational system was established. The Premier said, when he introduced this Bill, that he was simply giving effect to the legislation of a previous Government; but he was doing more than that. The honourable gentleman had before him facts which were not at the disposal of the previous Government. (Mr. Menteath) held in his hand a memorandum prepared by the Education Department in Wellington, and there was a statement therein contained which spoke volumes for the manner in which this Bill was previously presented to this The Secretary to the Education Department stated that he was never consulted, that his opinion was never asked, as to whether or not the two Boards would be able to carry on if the district were subdivided. And yet, without taking his opinion, a Bill to subdivide the district into two was presented to the House and passed into law. He thought, when the Secretary to the Education Department was not consulted, it showed that the Government could not have gone deeply into the matter. The present Premier had full information on the subject. He had before him a statement made by the Secretary to the Education De-

partment to the effect that, if the Board were split into two, one Board would have a debt of £700 and the other a debt of £900 at the end of each year: that was, £1,600 per annum would be required to maintain these two pigmy Boards. With that statement before him, he proceeded to pass through this Bill, as a Government measure, for subdividing the district. All he (Mr. Menteath) had to say was that he wished the people of Westland to know how it was that the outlying schools would be closed, and how it was that the children would be deprived of the benefit of education. He laid the responsibility for that on the present Premier, who had done this with full information before him, such as the last Government had not had, and at the instance of gentlemen who were not now in the House.

Subdivision Bill.

Mr. GUINNESS would only add one word to what took place in Committee on the previous He had then endeavoured to correct the Bill in such a way that the Education District of Westland should be continued, and not divided, and he believed that if that had been done, and a new Board had been elected in the place of those members of the Board who were on it when the mismanagement took place, a satisfactory result would have been obtained. His amendment was, however, rejected, and the whole responsibility now rested with the majority who had decided that the district should be divided. That decision having been come to, it only remained for him to let the House know, on the third reading, that he objected to and protested against the whole arrangement. He did so for this reason, in addition to those which had been urged by the honourable gentleman who had just sat down: that, if they were to keep up a system of education, they must endeavour to make it work as harmoniously as possible. When the House voted for this separation they were authorizing a charge upon the money which should be devoted to the education of the children of the district, who would not get their fair share of the education grant, because, as was shown by the memorandum, drawn up by Dr. Hislop, the permanent head of the department, the division of the district into two, and having two Boards of management, necessarily meant that there would be an annual deficiency in one district of about £700, and in the other of about £900. That meant simply closing up a number of schools in the outlying districts, which was very much to be regretted. He would have preferred to see the question stand over till next session, so that the matter might be fairly considered and fought out; and then, instead of creating two Boards, the whole of the West Coast might have been amalgamated into one education district-have been enlarged instead of decreased. However, as the matter had been decided otherwise, he would not take up the time of the House further, but would content himself by entering

his protest against the passing of the Bill.

Mr. FERGUS entirely agreed with the remarks of the honourable member for Inangahua, and altogether deprecated the splittingJoyce

Tellers.

Seddon.

up of the present education districts. In fact, from his experience, which had been considerable, he thought that the larger the districts the better would education be managed. If they cut up these small districts into two or three, they would simply be rendering the administration of education a farce. In fact, that was an opinion expressed by one honourable gentleman who supported this Bill in Committee, and whose avowed object was to make it a farce, because he was opposed to the whole system. If they were going to cut up these districts in this way, the result would be that at no distant day the whole management of education would have to be thrown into the hands of the Minister of Education and his officials in Wellington. To his mind that would be a very unfortunate result; but even that would be better than having a number of these small districts. If the question came to a vote he should vote against the third reading of the Bill.

Westland Education

Mr. STOUT did not believe that the creating of two districts would have any bad effect on the education of the children of Westland. The honourable gentleman who had just spoken mid that there would be a deficiency of £1,600; but he (Mr. Stout) might say that the deficiency of the late Board was about £5,000 in one year, so that there would be a saving. He could only say that the management of the late Board was simply disgraceful, and such as no local body had ever manifested in any colony. They had dealt with public money in a way that almost approached criminality. He did not think it was a wise step to divide education districts, and would prefer to have them made larger, and the grants increased; but, if this division took place, there would be time for the people of Westland to manage their affairs economically, and then they would probably find it to their interest to become united again: but he did not think there was any hope of that at present. If their affairs were managed economically, the children of the district would not suffer; but then they must get gentlemen to do some of the work for nothing, as was done in other parts of the country, and they would have to reduce the expenses of their Secretaries and Inspectors, and not be extravagant in their school-buildings. If they continued to be extravagant in that way, and did not pay the salaries of their teachers, then the House would have to interfere, and a special tax would have to be imposed on the district.

Mr. MENTEATH would like to correct an error into which the Premier had fallen with regard to there being a deficiency of £5,000. Quoting from a memorandum from the Education Department, he found that the total liability of the Westland Education District was £5,572. From that had to be deducted, for contracts made but not begun, £880, leaving a liability of £4,692; and then there was the share of the school-building vote for the year 1883-84, £1,824 — leaving, to be provided for, £2,868 6s. 6d.

Mr. STOUT said the honourable member was hardly correct. Would the House credit

it that there were cheques outstanding, issued by the Board, amounting to about £800? fact of the matter was that the Government would have to find something over £4,000 to make up the deficiency.

The House divided.

AYES, 35.

Allwright Lance Smith Locke Steward, W. J. Ballance McKenzie, J. Barron Stout Cadman Montgomery Thompson, T. Conolly O'Callaghan Tole Cowan O'Conor Turnbull Duncan Ormond Vogel Fergus Reese Walker White, W. Fraser Richardson, E. Ross Harper Shephard Bevan Holmes

Noes, 24.

Shrimski

Beetham. Lake Te Ao B.-Bradshaw Mackenzie, M. Thomson, J. W. Buchanan Moss Trimble Buckland.W.F. Newman Wakefield Pere Whyte, J. B. Fisher Grigg Richardson, G. Tellers. Hakuene Russell Guinness Hatch Samuel Menteath. Hursthouse

PAIRS.

For. Against. Coster Johnston Gore. Hurst, W. J.

Majority for, 11.

Bill read a third time.

Mr. FERGUS explained that he had unwittingly allowed himself to be locked in when the division was taken, although he had paired; and that, therefore, his vote had been claimed by Mr. Seddon for the Bill.

CONSOLIDATED STOCK BILL.

Sir J. VOGEL.—In moving the second reading of this Bill I wish to say that what it proposes to do was explained in the Financial Statement. It was explained in the Statement that the colony is reducing its debt by about a quarter of a million a year, and the amount is yearly increasing; so that during the next ten years, if we continue under present conditions, there would be a reduction of something like three million pounds on our debt from the operation of the Sinking Fund. And, Sir, it was explained in the Financial Statement, and in the memorable debate which took place upon that Statement, that, in our opinion, the colony was not called upon to make the sacrifice which is entailed by these yearly payments, whilst at the same time, for other purposes, it was borrowing money. With regard to the public debt of the colony, it was pointed out that there were two sources of relief to the colony. One was in not having to pay Sinking Fund; and it was pointed out that sinking funds were condemned by experience, and by all modern writers and financiers. other source of relief was a reduction of interest in the public debt by a process of converting our present debentures into securities bearing a lower rate of interest. Both objects the decrease of Sinking Fund and the reduction of the amount of interest—are gained by converting the present securities into securities of a different nature. This Bill, as framed, will enable immediate relief to be given to the consolidated revenue; but it is also framed with the idea, with the intention, that conversion should be carried on in such a manner, in such a way, and at such a time as may be found to be most beneficial. For instance, at present the process of conversion is very much blocked by the operations which took place last year. It is known to honourable members, and has been referred to in the House before, that those operations consisted of two classes. There was £6,000,000 of 5-30 bonds bearing 41 per cent. interest offered for conversion, and £1,250,000 of 5-30 bonds bearing 5 per cent. interest; and there was also a conversion of a further £1,800,000 of short-dated debentures held by the trust funds. In reality, the operation in relation to the last-mentioned debentures meant something more than conversion. Those debentures, having been issued only in the colony, were by the operation transferred from a colonially-domiciled loan to one domiciled in London. The £1,800,000 was all held by funds over which the colony had control, and the whole amount was converted at par. That is to say, the status and denomination was changed from that of a colonial loan to an English one, and in that operation some considerable amount was disposed of, enabling the trust funds to get rid of a considerable amount of debentures. They were changed into inscribed stock; a portion was sold, and a portion held for sale after the negotiation of the third million of the Three-Million Loan. There is still a considerable There is still a considerable number of these waiting to be put into the market. The invitation to convert the English debentures resulted in this way: Of £6,000,000 41-per-cent. debentures, £3,000,000 were brought in at a premium of 3 per cent. That is to say, £103 was given for every £100 of 44 - per - cent. debentures brought in. Of £1,250,000 5 - per - cent. debentures, £500,000 was brought in at a premium of 31 per cent. As I have said, these still, to a certain extent, block the market; and it is to be borne in mind also that the remaining portion of the 5-30s bearing 5 per cent. interest have been called in for payment. That is to say, they will be paid off, and an amount of inscribed stock created which will meet the payment. In any case, it is thought desirable that this Bill should be passed, so as to give those who are charged with carrying out the conversion the opportunity of choosing the most desirable time and taking the most desirable opportunities. But, in the meantime, the operation of the Bill is to suspend the pressure of the Sinking Fund in the only way in which it can be done: that is, we take our debts up to the 31st March last, and authorize the conversion of the whole of those debts

—or of an equivalent amount to those debts—into inscribed stock. It is thought absolutely necessary, in regard to the sinking funds, that we should keep the absolute letter of our engagements — that is to say, that we should pay yearly, through the Sinking Fund Commissioners, whatever is the amount prescribed by the various Acts authorizing the loans, or the various prospectuses under which the loans have been issued. It would be more correct to say the various prospectuses, because the Acts-gave power to the Treasurer or Governor in Council to issue the loans with sinking funds, and it was by the power thus given that prospectuses were issued, undertaking that the loans should bear sinking funds. It is absolutely necessary that the engagements contained in those various prospectuses should be carried out, and therefore we can in no way interfere with the aggregation of the sinking funds in the hands of the Commissioners, or interfere with the making of payments from the Consolidated Fund prescribed in the several agreements under which the loans were issued. What we do is this: We authorize by the Bill that an amount of stock shall be created each year, which will represent the amount of the increase in the hands of the Sinking Funds Commissioners for that year. In other words, we provide by this machinery that the debt as it existed at the end of March last cannot be increased beyond the yearly increase of the Sinking Fund: that is to say, there will be an amount of Sinking Fund always increasing. On the other hand, there will be created an equivalent amount of stock which will represent the annual increase of Sinking Fund in the hands of the Commissioners. Thus, it is provided that when the loan is converted, and the Sinking Fund set free, the first charge on that Sinking Fund shall be in the direction of paying off all the amount of stock which has been created under the operation of this Bill. We shall then arrive simply at this result: The amount of the converted loan will represent the amount dutstanding of that loan on the 30th March last. After a loan is converted, and the amount of stock created under the operation of this Act is paid off, the balance of the Sinking Fund it is proposed by this Bill shall be available for such purposes as Parliament prescribes. Then, there is a machinery by which short-dated debentures can be issued as intermediary to the inscription of stock; because in practice it is found, and will be found, that it may be convenient to create short-dated debentures, domiciled here or at Home, which will be converted into stock as the conversion operations proceed. It may be urged that the accrued Sinking Fund should be employed in paying off portions of our debt—that is to say, that so much of the money as has accrued through the agency of the Sinking Fund should be employed in paying off an equivalent amount of the loans without conversion. We provide otherwise in this series of the conversion of the We provide for the conversion of the Bill. total amount, and for setting free the Sink-

Stock Bill.

converted and the sinking funds are set free, the latter should be available for such purposes as Parliament may prescribe, less the amount required to pay off the increases authorized under the provisions of this Bill. I think it is hardly necessary for me to refer more particularly to the machinery of the Bill. There is one thing honourable members will notice. A great deal of power is given to the Colonial Treasurer, personally, in the Bill. The intention of the Bill is that the Colonial Treasurer shall be, as it were, the agent for the operations of the Bill in the colony, and that the Agents under the other Loan Acts shall be, without any special power of delegation by the Governor in Council, Agents under this Act outside the colony. I hardly think it will be necessary to enter into a further explanation of the practical effects of the Bill. Honourable members will bear this in mind: that the whole basis of it is the conversion of our debts up to the 31st March last, and the release of the revenue to the extent yearly of the Sinking Fund increase. That increase will be represented to some extent by bonds which will be created for conversion; or, if conversion takes place directly, the increase of the Sinking Fund will be represented by the direct conversion - that is tosay, by an equivalent reduction in the amount of yearly contribution. I dwelt in the Financial Statement on the folly of paying off a portion of our debt under the present circumstances of the colony, and I do not think it is necessary for me to dwell further upon that subject. I have here an extract which showsvery tersely the fallacy, as it is held by long experience, of paying off public debts by sinking funds, and I will ask the House to allow me to read it from the "Encyclopædia Britan-nica," on the article "Funds":—

Stock Bill.

"A sinking fund for the extinction of the public debt was established by Sir Robert Walpole as early as 1716; but it was virtually subverted in 1733. It was again instituted by Mr. Pitt in 1786; and, singular as it may now appear, it was for a lengthened period supposed that, by means of the 'legerdemain' operation of compound interest, the public debt might be reduced by borrowing money to pay it off. Dr. Hamilton, of Aberdeen, has the merit of having dissipated this extraordinary delusion, the grossest, certainly, by which any civilized nation ever suffered itself to be imposed upon. He showed that the excess of revenue overexpenditure is the only real sinking fund—the only means by which any portion of the public debt had ever been, or ever could be, paid off; and that all sinking funds operating at compound interest or otherwise, excepting in as far as they happened to be founded on this principle, were mere quackery and delusion. In fact, upon examining into the matter, it was found that the public debt would have been decidedly less had the sinking fund never been heard of. After such an exposition, the existence of the sinking fund was impossible, and, having undergone various modifications, it was finally abolished by the 10th Geo. IV., cap. 27, which enacts that the sum henceforth annually

ing Fund. But it is not necessarily part of the machinery of the Bill that it should be so. It might be provided, if thought better, that so much of the Sinking Fund, when set free, as is required, shall be used for paying off the annual increases made under the operation of the present Bill, and that the balance of the accrued Sinking Fund should not be employed as Parliament directs, but should be employed in paying off an equivalent amount of the debt. I think it is desirable not to adopt the latter course, but to adopt the course prescribed in the Bill: still, such an alteration would not interfere materially with the principle of the Bill. There are, so to speak, two kinds of Sinking Fund. One part of the Sinking Fund is represented by dead or cancelled bonds, and they are alive only insomuch that they pay interest yearly for the purpose of that interest being employed in drawing further bonds year by year. But they are to all other intents and purposes cancelled, and, in so far as the drawn bonds are concerned, there is no power in this Bill to revive them. But there are other loans the sinking funds of which are not employed in They represent simply an annual drawings. amount of money set apart, so to speak, parallel to the liability of the debt. Those sinking funds accumulate in the hand of the Commissioners, but they are not directly responsible for the debts of the debentures. The debentures, for example, are payable at the Treasury, or at the office of the Crown Agents, and they are presented for payment. It may be, of course, and it is possible, that, instead of otherwise providing for meeting those debentures as they mature, the accrued Sinking Fund might be sold, and the money obtained by the sale might be held at the Treasury or by the Crown Agents as applicable to paying off the debentures. That is possible, though no machinery has been provided for the purpose. What I wish to point out is, that the sinking funds of those loans which are not drawing loans are mere sinking funds held as security for or representing an equivalent amount of debt. is, they are only indirectly hypothecated to the payment of the debt as it matures. Now, it appears to me, supposing we have a loan maturing, say, next month, of a million of money, and supposing we have in sinking fund a sum of £800,000 or £1,000,000 to meet it, that it might be as convenient, and possibly more convenient, to convert the whole of the loan by the issue of fresh debentures or inscribed stock, and to meet it in that way by the issue of a new loan or converted loan, than by selling miscellaneous stocks held by the Sinking Fund Commissioners and obtaining the funds in that manner. However, as I have said, the main principle of the Bill is not concerned in the question of whether or not the accrued Sinking Fund, after conversion, should be held as applicable to the purposes of the colony as prescribed by Parliament. We have placed it in the Bill, as we deem it desirable that it should be so provided - that there should be ower to convert the debt as it stood on the 31st March last; and that, as the several loans are

[HOUSE.]

applicable to the reduction of the public debt shall consist of the actual surplus revenue be-

yond the expenditure. And, Sir, it appears to have been the case that the views expressed in the Financial Statement and the views here expressed are views that have been from time to time largely expressed in this House. I ventured, in the Financial Statement, to mention the names of several honourable members who had brought the subject before me, or before the colony, previous to my bringing forward these proposals; but I find that I have not by any means exhausted the number of members who look forward to this as a means of great relief to the colony. I find that the honourable member for Waimea, for example, has spoken most forcibly to his constituents and this House on the subject, pointing out the fallacy and absurdity of the colony being charged with the heavy amount of redemption of debt whilst it was borrowing larger sums of money for the purpose of carrying out its public works. Another honourable member, who will be my colleague when we carry through the City Electorates Bill—the honourable member for Christchurch Southalso made a very prominent point of it, not only in speeches made in this House, but during the last general election. Therefore it cannot be said to be a novelty which is now brought down by the Government. It is merely that the Government devise a means for giving effect to the opinions, very largely entertained before, in the direction that this was a relief to which the colony had justly the right to look. I believe it was stated that the late Government also entertained views in the same direction. Whether it was their intention to bring down proposals of this kind or not, I do not know. However, the matter is not a novelty; and, as regards its effect, it enables us to do, first, without extra taxation, which we should have had to resort to; it enables us to get rid of half the property-tax, which has been so very largely the means of depressing the industries of the colony and the confidence of those who have large interests in the colony; and it will be the means of enabling us to propose for the future a finance which will be unburdened by these periodical accumulations of floating debts to be added to the funded It is the ambition of the Government, and I hope they will be able next session, to come down with a plan of finance which will draw a sharp and well-defined line between the revenues which are to belong to the Colonial Government and those which are to belong to the local bodies, and between the revenues which the Colonial Government will raise and those which local bodies will raise; and a no less sharp and well-defined line between the duties which the Colonial Government are henceforth to perform and the duties which are to devolve upon the local bodies. This is a step in the direction of putting the finance of the colony upon a more satisfactory and stable footing. I feel it would be unnecessary

I will conclude by moving, That the Bill be now read a second time.

Major ATKINSON.-–Sir, the first question that I should like to ask the House is, What is this Bill wanted for at all? The honourable gentleman -- perhaps fairly enough, after the financial policy which he has put before the country—assumes that the Bill is wanted, and that it is a reasonable Bill to submit to this House. But I tell him that he has not, either in his Financial Statement or to-night, given us one good reason why this Bill is wanted at all. He has, at the latter end of his speech just now delivered, given us, apparently, some reasons that are in his own mind. He has not enlarged upon them, and I submit that they are no reasons at all, when one goes and ex amines their true meaning. Now, the chief reason, as I understood to-night, which he gave was that it was the first move to giving us a good local finance; and, if I followed him rightly,

Mr. STOUT. — The honourable gentlemse has misunderstood that. I understood my honourable colleague to say that it was the first step to giving us a stable finance, not a

local finance. Major ATKINSON. — I was listening attentively to what the Treasurer said, and I under stood him to say that this was the first move to put our general finance in a position to get a proper local finance: that was, we got relief. I submit it is no such thing at all. What does this Bill really do? And what is the object of it? The Bill does this: It simply authorizes the Treasurer to adopt that very simple, that very old, and that very bad principle familia to spendthrifts and persons who are hard upborrowing to pay their debts, and then return ing thanks that that wretched thing is dome with. That is the meaning of this measure "Borrow, borrow, borrow, and you are right your difficulties are removed: that is, if you will only borrow, this Bill will free us of this wretched property-tax; and then we can tall to you about all other matters." Now, Sir, say this House, by the passing of this Bill, throwing away the only opportunity that is likely to have for many years to come of really adjusting its finance upon a sound basis. The late Government held this—and I believe the honourable gentleman himself held it som time ago, but undoubtedly the late Government held it — and I think the honourable gentleman knew they held it very strongly: the the time for the revision of the whole taxation of the country would be when we had leg timately fulfilled our obligations to the Eng lish creditor by consolidating our loans. It as distinctly understood in London as it i understood here that we have undertaken on of our consolidated revenue to find this Sink ing Fund. I say that is as well-understoo an undertaking as that we shall find the in terest on our debt, and we should be just a much justified in borrowing money to pay ou interest as to pay this Sinking Fund. That i how this matter stands, so far as our engage

ments on the London money-market are con

for me to dwell longer upon the subject, and

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cerned; and I venture to say it is not the last we shall hear of this, and it will certainly affect our credit to a very large extent as we go on borrowing. Every honourable gentleman who has followed and knows our position in London knows that we are being perpetually assailed as the one extravagant colony-borrowing, borrowing, borrowing, without reference to its capability of paying: that is the accusation made against us; and now to say, after having made all those solemn pledges, that we are not prepared to lay by a certain amount out of revenue yearly to redeem our debt, that we are unwilling to do that, that the colony is in such a state that it cannot do it, that the burden is so intolerable now that the colony will not submit to it any longer-if we say that, it will be said, and said with truth, that we are now shirking the responsibilities we undertook de-liberately and with thought. And how are we to answer it? And what is it all for? What will be the answer? To relieve owners of property of a tax which the honourable gentleman says interferes with capital. That will be the statement, for I wish this House to mark that there has been no pretence of reviewing our taxation, no pretence of considering whether this is the right tax to take off or not, no pretence of examining as to the class on which taxation bears most heavily at the present time. That, Sir, has not entered into the honourable gentleman's calculations at all. The honourable gentleman says, "I must restore confidence in the owners of property; the propertytar bears heavily upon them: that must go." Well, Sir, if that is finance, I say, Deliver the colony from it. But how is it to be done? Simply by borrowing more money and paying it into the Consolidated Fund. It seems to be outside the question altogether whether we are using this money to pay our debts. Now, it is, perhaps, an old-fashioned notion to think that it is an obligation and mther creditable that we should pay our debts. I have heard it said that a man, upon having money left to him, was so lost to all sense of propriety that he muddled away the whole of it by paying his debts. It seems to me that we are bound in honour, and for our credit's we are bound in nonour, and to sake, not to go and borrow more money to pay sake, not to go and borrow more money to pay. We a debt which we are quite able to pay. We were all agreed, when the Inscription of Stock act was passed, that the Sinking Fund was not a wise operation; but this is an undertaking with the persons who lent us the money, and we ought to be particular not to commit a breach of faith with them and borrow this money to pay the Sinking Fund. They never contemplated that. They contemplated that the colony would be prepared to pay out of revenue. I ask honourable members to consider what will be the effect of our doing that. Is it really a relief to us? Does any honourable gentleman believe that the one sole object of doing this is not that we may be in a position to borrow more money a little sooner? If I thought that the object of this was only to relieve us, and that we were only to borrow a moderate amount, I might consent, although

with a bad grace, to some such Bill as this; but it is quite evident that the only object is to relieve us so that we may be able to borrow more money. You cannot get rid of that position, and when you have done that you will be able to borrow seven and a half millions of money. That is the bait that is held out to us—the bait of a further borrowing power, if we only borrow to do this. I would ask, are we wise in doing this? Are we wise, in order to enable us to borrow more, to borrow to dothis? Why can we not wait for a year or two, until we have earned, as it were, this Sinking Fund in a legitimate way? In a year or two this Sinking Fund will be available to us in the ordinary course by carrying out the arrangement which we have made with our creditors—that is to say, to pay the Sinking Fund from our consolidated revenue until they have agreed to exchange debentures in another classof stock, or be paid off in the ordinary course. This would be straightforward, and everybody could understand it. But what will now be said? Everybody will say, "Here is another dodge to get extra power of borrowing." Every one who knows the London money-market will know that for money raised in the way proposed we shall have to pay so much more per cent. than we should otherwise pay. I submit that, before we consent to passing this Bill, the honourable gentleman ought to show ussome better reason for it than merely that it will enable us to borrow more money and at a. quicker rate than we should be able to do it. before. When the honourable gentleman first took office he undertook to place our finances on a better footing; he undertook to relieve us of some burdens: but does this House believe for a moment that we are to be relieved by borrowing to pay our Sinking Fund? Is that a relief? How can it be a relief? What does it relieve us from? No doubt it is a relief to this extent: that we have during the current year £240,000 more for expenditure. You will observe that there is no effort made-no pretence at effort made—to reduce expenditure. The honourable gentlemen may be going to do it next year; I do not say they are not; but there is no attempt made to reduce expenditure this year. I think that from honourable gentlemen who know as much of the colony as those honourable gentlemen do who came here prepared to take office—who have been telling the country that they could make great savings, great reductions—we might have expected something else than that we were to have £244,000 in order to relieve the Consolidated Fund. That is the sum and substance of what those honourable gentlemen propose Then, Sir, when we come to the Bill itself, the honourable gentleman says that it will enable him to borrow, first of all, upon. short-dated debentures-I think seven-year debentures—and then to inscribe permanently. If we once admit the principle, that seems to me what I call a most immoral act. If we are going to borrow money year after year topay our Sinking Fund, then I say that proposal is not unreasonable, except to an extent. which I will point out directly. But I want to know—and I think this House might have been informed-whether the honourable gentleman does not propose immediately to make the inscription—how soon he means to make the inscription, and how much he means to use. He read a calogram some time ago from the Agent-General and the Loan Agents, to the effect that a very excellent operation could be -completed shortly, after the raising of the third million loan, in January next. I think he might have shown about the amount of money he required to raise under this Act. No doubt the inscription effects a saving. The House is aware that by the inscription carried on by the late Government some £36,000 a year has been saved already, and a very large amount can be saved immediately by the inscription of the loan of 1867. Then, the honourable gentleman tells us—I am not quite certain whether I fol-lowed him, but if I have not understood him I shall be obliged if he will correct me-he tells us that the public debt will not be increased. I could not follow him in that at all, because it is quite clear to my mind that the public debt must be, and will be, increased by this operation. As I understand it, we have now got a Sinking Fund accrued of three millions, or a little over that amount. We have got to pay this year to Sinking Fund what we saved out of Consolidated Fund. We have paid so much of it already, and that, I suppose, the honourable gentleman will take back. We shall pay, during this year, in round numbers, something like a quarter of a million. If I understand the operation which the honourable gentleman is going to perform, it is this: Supposing he makes no inscription during the present year of the loan, he will want to recoup the Consolidated Fund a quarter of a million; what he has to provide for the Sinking Fund he will have to exceed to the extent of a quarter of a million. Therefore he will have to issue other 4-per-cent. debentures for that amount, supposing he can sell them at par, or he will have to issue debentures under the 10th clauseseven-year debentures. The public debt will be increased to that amount. It must be increased to the whole amount of the money

Sir J. VOGEL.—It will be exactly the same, for we increase the Sinking Fund. The honourable gentleman is quite right so far as he goes, but he fails to see that, whilst there will be an increased debt of £240,000 on the one side, there will be a similar increase in the Sinking Fund. I will illustrate it this way: If a man puts a shilling in one hand and has a shilling in the other hand, he has the same amount in each hand. If he drops one of the shillings, then he has only one shilling in one hand: that is, he has only half the moncy he had.

Major ATKINSON.—The honourable gentleman will have to show, in reference to the short-dated debentures, that he will have an equivalent amount on the other side, because some of it will be cancelled. The debentures will be cancelled year after year, and the Sinking Fund will not be increased any more. He

will have to give £244,000 year after year t the Sinking Fund. The honourable gentlems would be quite right if the £244,000 to go t the Sinking Fund was to go to what we ca accrued Sinking Fund, which increases yes by year by the amount of interest on the d bentures that are cancelled in the one los and the investments that are made on the other; but after this Bill is passed no in vestments will take place and no cancelliz will take place. The honourable gentlems will see that in a moment. Take the case the Consolidated Loan. What will happen The debenture-holder will bring up his debe tures, and the honourable gentleman will issu to him 4-per-cent. debentures in their place The cancelled debenture cannot bear interes because it is done with altogether, having bec changed for a 4-per-cent. debenture under the If taken in the ordinary course, the ca celled debentures would have borne interes and would have gone to increase the Sinkin Fund; but no interest will accrue under the proposed operation.

sir J. VOGEL.—The honourable gentlema is quite mistaken. Supposing the operation the honourable gentleman speaks of takes placethat a person is willing to accept a 4-per-cent debenture for a drawn bond—what would be the operation? The honourable gentleman say that the cancelled bond will not bear interest Suppose the amount is £100, and Mr. Jones of Mr. Brown has got a bond to be paid off, and willing to take a new bond instead of £100. The Crown Agents will say to him, "Here is new 4-per-cent. bond: give me your cancelle bond." They will then give us the £100 for the wood, keeping the cancelled one the sam as they do now.

Major ATKINSON. - If the honourable gentleman is going to pay on the cancelle bond to the continuation of the Sinking Fund and upon a bond which gives no exchang then he pays more interest. He is entire wrong in supposing that that will take place which he says—that the Sinking Fund will it crease. It will not increase the Sinking Fund Supposing it to be a quarter of a million now, will not increase beyond a quarter of a million There it will remain. The operation would this: Each quarter we should pay £25 to the Crown Agents; the drawing day comes rous about the 15th March; the bond would then drawn, and the Crown Agent or our agent woul taking this money, or will you take 4-per-cent debentures?" We will suppose that he tak the 4-per-cent. debenture. How would he ge it? He would pay the bond into the Treasur, in order that the Treasurer might issue the debenture. That money had already bee paid out of the Treasury, so that it simple comes into the Treasury again; but the 4-pe cent. debenture has gone out, on which interes has to be paid in the future. If he will sho

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me how he is going to perform that operation it will be very fine: the pea under the thimble

will be nothing to it. As far as I can under

stand it, the debt must be and will be great!

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increased. I want the House clearly to understand that. I do not think there can be any doubt about it, but, if the honourable gentle-man can show that I am wrong, then I shall be very glad. In the meantime I must assume that the debt is going to be increased, and not reduced. I ask again, why are we to have this increase? Has it been shown that we cannot bear this charge? Certainly not. Then, why is this to be done? Why not wait for the ordinary operation of the Stock Act, without this jugglery, to relieve us of this burden? We are all agreed that a sinking fund is not a wise operation; and there is no doubt that it is a losing operation, because of the cost of the investment. Everybody who knows anything about these matters knows that: but, if we have made a bargain, we must keep to it, even to our own hurt, if necessary. There is no necessity for our going upon these lines unless we are suffering under enormous pressure, which we are not at the present time. Then, what does the Bill say? And it is even more hurtful in this, for it goes on to say that, after a portion of the loan has been converted, we are not to continue to pay the whole of the Sinking Fund.

Sir J. VOGEL.—The honourable gentleman is mistaken. We are to take none of the Sinking Fund until sufficient is left to cover the entire amount of the outstanding loan.

Major ATKINSON.—The clause I refer to is

clause 8, which says,-

When any loan is partially converted, the Sinking Fund Commissioners or Trustees shall retain in their hands such amount in money or securities as will be sufficient, in their opinion, for the redemption of the balance of the loan outstanding and interest thereon, and the balance of Sinking Fund over and above such amount shall be held to be set free. But it is hereby expressly provided that, if, from any cause, it is found that the amount so retained is insufficient, then the difference shall be a charge upon and shall be paid out of the Consolidated Fund without further appropriation by Parliament."

Now, this seems fair enough. It seems quite reasonable to say that, supposing we should convert a quarter of the seven millions that are called the consolidated stocks of the 1867 and 1868 loans, we ought not to go on paying sinking fund on the whole of them. But there is no doubt that, if you once commence to tamper in that way with the loans, when you have entered into an undertaking to make the payments, you will get into very bad odour on the English money-market. You are taking upon yourself to say what amount of sinking fund shall be paid and what shall not, when you have distinctly undertaken to set apart the whole of the sinking fund. It has been a rule, which has never been departed from, that you should not make a change of that kind without the consent of the bondholder; and I say that, in our present state of borrowing, if we tamper with the bonds in this way, leaving it to the discretion of the Sinking Fund Commissioners to say how much they

will pay, it will be fatal to our credit; and I hope the House will not assent to it. The whole amount should be lodged, in order to preserve our credit on the London moneymarket. And now we come to clause 10: and here I must confess that I had some doubt whether I understood the clause aright or not; but, from the explanation of the Treasurer, I think I did, and, if I understand it rightly, it appears to me that there is nothing in this Bill to prevent the Treasurer, if he be desirous, from issuing, on his own authority, some £20,000,000 of short-dated debentures. I do not say that that is the exact amount of the unconverted loan; but some £12,000,000 has been converted, and the debt is about £32,000,000, so that, in round numbers, it is from £15,000,000 to £20,000,000. I do not know whether the honourable gentleman desires to do that; but, if he does desire it, such a power is a most dangerous one for this House to give, because, undoubtedly, if the Government ran short of money, they could issue debentures under this clause for any amount they might want, and may pay it in-the clause does not say so, but I presume the Controller would compel them to do so. I do not suppose the honourable gentleman intended to take such a power as that, and I would suggest that he should look at it, and, if the Bill should get into Committee, have it made clear, for I am sure the House would not consent to give such a large power as that. Another very objectionable feature of the Bill is that it gives to the Colonial Treasurer entire power to deal with these moneys. He is to issue the bonds, to determine their form, and to appoint Agents. Such a power has never hitherto been given, and I submit that it ought to be reserved for the Governor in Council, and not given to the Colonial Treasurer. He has told us to-night that the reason he has taken that power is that he wishes the Colonial Treasurer to be the Agent for the loan in the colony. But I submit that we do not want an Agent appointed by Act. We want the Colonial Treasurer to the the treasurer to t surer to act here with the Governor and his own colleagues, and to have Agents to act at Home. I do not know whether the Government think that an important point, but I hope, if we are unfortunate enough to get into Committee on this Bill, they will see their way to consent that the Governor in Council shall be put in this Bill as has been done in other Bills. Then, there seems to me to be considerable contradiction in the Bill. I do not know whether it is so, but, as I read it, there seems considerable conflict between the various clauses. For instance, take clause 4, which is a proper clause, except the latter part of it. I do not think the Agents should be the judges; I think that should be left to the Governor in Council, or to the Government at all events. Under that clause they can issue, notwithstanding the provisions of the general Act, an amount of stock greater than the equivalent amount they are going to cancel; and of course there is a clause in the original Act, with which this is incorporated, which says they shall not exceed the amount of stock then outstanding; and there is also a clause in this Bill which says, "The amount of stock created and of debentures outstanding shall not at any time together exceed the total amount of stock which may be created under the provisions of this Act and the said Act." That would seem to repeal the clause of the Bill which authorizes the increase of the stock where the interest is greater than 4 per cent. I think this clause would render it impossible to convert 5-per-cent. debentures into 4 percents above par. I should like the Treasurer to take a note of that point. Sir, I have trespassed on the attention of the House at some length on this subject, because I feel considerable interest in it. We are now making a new departure, and I fear that we are treading on very dangerous ground; that we have already gone as far as is prudent, and stretched our credit on the London moneymarket to its limit. And now, when we have a million of the three millions to raise, when we are going to borrow a million and a half of a new loan, and when we are going to borrow a million for the Public Works Loan, and when we are laying out works on which we propose to spend the whole of this, instead of, as it were, making an effort to show what our consolidated revenue will readily bear, we are proclaiming from the highest official quarters that we are unable to continue the payment of a quarter of a million a year of Sinking Fund. What effect can that have on the creditor and on the London money-market? You may depend upon it that it will be said that the country cannot bear the burden; and the English creditor will say to us, "How can you, as honest men, come and ask to borrow all this money?" I confess that I never felt so anxious about any of our borrowing as I do about this. I feel that we are going on to most dangerous ground. I feel that a very little may cause a great disaster in the colony. We are pressing our credit in a way not justifiable, and at the same time we are proposing to shift the burden from our own shoulders, which we have never thought of doing before. We have always hitherto put our hands into our own pockets to meet our liabilities. It may be a sneering matter to the Premier, but it is a very serious matter to me, and I am sure it is so to the Treasurer too; and it ought to be so to the Premier, if he ever treats any of these subjects in a serious way. I would beg of the House to consider the effect of this measure, and I would ask the honourable gentleman in his reply to give us some reasons for passing it. I say, here we are, with £1,000,000, and with £1,500,000, and with another £1,000,000 — £3,500,000, in all—which we are going to ask the English creditor for; and in the same breath we are passing this Bill to cease paying Sinking Fund, and we are to issue debentures to pay interest; and, further than that, the Treasurer has announced in his Statement also that we shall be quite justified in capitalizing the interest as well. I should like to ask how far we are off that operation. And, then, Statement was delivered to criticise it is

what would be our position? Why, it can be but two or three years before the whole benefit that we are supposed to derive from this promised relief will have disappeared. It is quite clear, by what the Government have laid down, that we are going to borrow a million and a half, beginning from after next session. Then, I would ask, where is it to come from? What position shall we be in? And yet the honourable gentleman draws glowing pictures of the prosperity that is to follow all this. I shall show honourable members, when we come to discuss the public works estimates, that, where the honourable gentleman has departed from the lines laid down by the late Government, he has departed in the wrong direction, and in a direction that, I venture to say, will not approve itself to members of the House. This policy of pushing on works and getting returns is not to be found in the Public Works Statement; and honourable gentlemen will see, when they come to look into the matter, that the whole thing is a delusion and a sham. A delusion and sham, I say, notwithstanding the laughter of the Premier. They are not going to spend more upon completing works, but a great deal more is going to be spent on open lines than is necessary. This talk about pushing on works and bringing prosperity upon the country is an immense sham, and what the honourable member means by it is simply borrowing more money as fast as possible, instead of "muddling away our money" in paying our debts. I do hope the House will reject the Bill, and I hope so because I feel quite certain that it veils the greatest blow that was ever aimed at the credit of New Zealand. I shall therefore move, That the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

Mr. MOSS.—I am glad to find that the honourable member for Egmont has at last discovered that the Financial Statement, which he accepted at the time it was made, contains principles which ought not to have been accepted by the House, and which I was surprised to see him not opposing at the time the Statement was made.

Major ATKINSON. - Did you read my speech?

Mr. MOSS. — Where was the honourable member's vote?

Major ATKINSON.—That had nothing to do with it.

Mr. MOSS.—At all events I can now look back with satisfaction at the vote I gave when a few of us went into the lobby to show ou disapproval of the Statement. Two months ago I objected to the Sinking Fund being deal with as is proposed; but it is only now that the honourable member for Egmont seems to see the matter in its true position. I do not think it required two months' consideration by see that there were very debatable question raised in this Statement.

Major ATKINSON.—I should like to say word or two in personal explanation. I tool the very first opportunity after the Financia

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exactly the same way as I have criticised it | to-night. This is the very first opportunity I have had since then of going into the question We have not had the Bill before us

Mr. MONTGOMERY.—Why did you not ask for the Bill?

Major ATKINSON. — I did ask for it, but could not get it.

Mr. MOSS.—The honourable member for Egmont must have had parliamentary experience enough to know the futility of allowing the Financial Statement to pass with the idea that we should have any opportunity of considering the matter in detail afterwards. He himself, for three or four years, kept the Opposition from attacking his proposals by the same process that he has allowed to operate against him in the present instance. The Opposition time after time allowed the Financial Statement to pass without debate, on the understanding that they would have an opportunity of considering the measures in detail when the Bills came down; but they never had an opportunity of doing so: and we see the same thing now. I take the opportunity of dis-puting altogether what appears to be accepted as an axiom by both the Colonial Treasurer and the honourable member for Egmont. dispute the wisdom of dealing with the Sinking Fund in the way it is here proposed to deal with it. I say that the most trustworthy authorities are not in favour of doing away with a sinking fund in the circumstances in which we are situated. The honourable gentleman quotes English authorities dealing with English funds. But what a difference there is between our funds and the English funds! The English Consols may be paid off at any moment. The holder cannot claim payment when he chooses, but the Government can pay them off at any time. That is the principle upon which the English debt is raised, and a sinking fund is quite unneces-sary there. Our debt is entirely different. It is raised upon the American principle. They cannot pay it off until the expiration of the period for which it was borrowed; and all American financiers agree that the public debt should be paid off at the earliest possible period.

America works in this direction. They hold, and I believe hold rightly, that no generation has a right to burden the generation that comes after it; but that, if burdens are incurred, every effort should be made to pay them off as speedily as possible. So fixed is this idea in the minds of American financiers that they have paid off a considerable part of that enormous debt of £550,000,000 incurred within a period of five years. In 1860 that great country had only an indebtedness of £12,000,000, whereas in 1865 it owed £550,000,000. So firmly do they hold the view that one generation has no right to burden another, that since shat time they have paid off £250,000,000 or £260,000,000, and will have paid off the whole before the present generation shall have passed away. That is an example for us to follow;

bow to its decision. Now, let us ask what is the purpose in reference to this Sinking Fund? Can we hide from ourselves what is really meant? The object is, in the first place, to get possession of £240,000 per annum, being the amount due yearly from the revenue to the Sinking Fund, and the amount earned by the accrued Sinking Fund each year. And how is that money to be used when the Government get it? It is not to be applied to reducing our indebtedness; but to reducing our taxation, and reducing it in the wrong direction. How the honourable member for Egmont could allow that to pass, how he could have refrained from voting when I ventured to move against it two months ago, I cannot conceive. It was plain then, as it is now. Here, today, we have laid before us a Public Works Bill and a New Zealand Loan Bill; so that, while on the one hand we are seizing this £240,000 as a means of reducing the property-tax, on the other we are borrowing money to put up schoolbuildings, to make most temporary roads for opening up land—borrowing for all kinds of purposes, which will not in any way aid in increasing the production of the country. It is thus that we are adding to our permanent debt. Is that sound finance? Then, the second object is to get possession of the accumulated Sinking Fund. And what is to be done with it? It is to be scrambled for on the floor of the House from time to time. It would be infinitely better to leave that Sinking Fund where it is, untouched. By all means cease to add to it, if you so wish; but it would be far better to leave that £3,000,000 where it is. If we want to borrow more money, let us do it in the ordinary way, and attach to the Loan Bill a schedule of the purposes for which the money is to be used. There appears to me to be great danger in the present financial policy - that we are near another era of scrambling and demoralization, with difficulties to follow, as they have always followed such expenditure in the past. Section 10 of the Bill. as ture in the past. Section 10 of the Bill, as I read it, does not appear to me in the same light as that in which the honourable member for Egmont has viewed it; but it certainly gives the Treasurer most extraordinary power. It gives him power to raise £3,000,000 on sevenyear debentures: he may put seven-year de-bentures into the Sinking Fund and take out debentures worth £3,000,000 and sell them, instead of raising any loan. That seems to be the whole process—to fill the Sinking Fund with seven-year debentures, and to take out of it the New Zoaland debentures, the Australian debentures, and the Canadian debentures. If they can convert the Sinking Fund debentures into stock and sell them, they will be able to tell us that they have a great deal of money to spend, and that there is no necessity for loans or taxation. I have my doubts whether we shall find it so easy to raise this money-whether we shall not seriously injure the credit of the colony. This Bill also provides for no less than seventeen millions pounds' worth of debentures being converted. That, but, as the House has decided otherwise, I must Sir, is a very large transaction; and, as I under-

stand the Bill, until these seventeen millions ! of debentures are converted the Treasurer will have power to issue to the end of the year the short-dated debentures to which I have alluded. Pending that conversion, which may take two years or may take twenty years, the Treasurer will have power to issue these seven-year debentures, and appropriate the proceeds in such manner as this House may from time to time think fit. These seem to be the great objections to this Bill - objections which, I think, are of a most grave character, but which I will not enter into further, at this stage of the Bill. I will only say that I hope sincerely this Bill will be very materially altered in Committee. I do not see how it is to be objected to on the second reading, because the principle of the Bill, so far as the propriety of consolidating stock, and of applying the released Sinking Fund, after consolidation, to other purposes, is concerned, is admitted on all sides. But I hope that, in Committee, it will be pulled to pieces very thoroughly. I hope the objectionable clauses will be erased, and that we shall make the Government understand that we are determined in this House not to enter upon a new career such as that from which we are just escaping, that we will not admit that we have the right to gratify every want and every whim, and to hand down to those coming after us burdens which it requires very little insight indeed to see it will be almost impossible for them to bear. One of the newspapers the other day reported me as having said that "posterity would shed tears over our proceedings." I am not conscious of having used the phrase, and do not believe that I did. But I feel perfectly sure that, if we do not take some little pains to arrest not only this Government, but the Governments that may succeed them, in the course of plunging the country deeper and deeper into debt, posterity perhaps will not shed tears over us, but will have reason to curse us for the evils we shall have brought upon them. Sir, I object to the 5th and 6th sections, as giving power to deal with the annual earnings of the Sinking Fund in a very objectionable manner; but there are other sections which, with some amendment in Committee, may be made useful, and therefore I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill.

Sir J. VOGEL,—There is only one complaint I wish to make in regard to the speech of the honourable member for Egmont, and that is with regard to his statement that the Bill proposes to seize the Sinking Fund. With this exception, it struck me that, although the honourable member spoke earnestly and with a considerable amount of force, he spoke with a desire to deal fairly with the measure. But he certainly was led into a grave mistake, because the Bill does not propose to seize the Sinking Fund. On the contrary, the 8th clause, to which the honourable gentleman refers, expressly says that, before you touch any Sinking Fund, you shall place in the hands of the Sinking Fund Commissioners sufficient to pay off the whole of the balance of the debt. Now, to show the

honourable member how far that is the case, I will refer to our Acts dealing with the public debt and Sinking Fund. In an Act passed so long ago as 1868 it was provided that, as the debt was converted, a proportionate part of the Sink-ing Fund might be released: for example, if a quarter of the debt were converted, one-quarter of the accumulated Sinking Fund might be taken possession of. In framing this Bill Isaid; "No, I will not put that provision in this Bill. We will not touch the Sinking Fund until we have a sufficient amount of Sinking Fund to provide for whatever amount of outstanding debentures are left." I think the honourable member will be fair enough to admit that I have met him on that point. The honourable gentleman says that the Bill simply authorizes borrowing to pay our debts. He answered that practically himself, because, before he finished, he said the Bill did considerably more; and I am prepared to show that its operation is not of that nature. Then he went on to say, repeating the word "borrow" in musical rhythm many times, that that was the nature of the Bill. But I think that was not an original idea. The honourable gentleman next to him, the member for Selwyn, has on several occasions spoken of "Borrow, borrow, borrow," The honourable member for Egmont says that ' the time will come for the settling of our finances when our loans are consolidated, and he says that in the course of a year or two we shall have consolidated our loans so as to get rid of our Sinking Fund. The honourable gentleman told us that in the course of a year or two we shall get rid of our Sinking Fund by consolidation, but immediately afterwards he told us it was immoral and destructive of our credit to get rid of our Sinking Fund. He says, "You should say you will be prepared to pay Sinking Fund." He says we should wait and not take any step to relieve ourselves. Now, is it not quite as immoral to get rid of the Sinking Fund by conversion alone as it is to get rid of it by this process? The difference between his proposal and ours is simply this: He says, "Wait, wait, wait," which is, to my mind, the motto of that part of the country from which the honourable gentleman comes. "Wait, wait, wait, till something turns up. Wait, wait; do not do anything: go on burdening the country with extra payments." Now, I say this: that we need not wait; and, if we are of opinion that it is right we should convert our debt as it stands now, it is perfectly right that we should convert the accruing Sinking Fund as it accrues. The difference between the honourable gentleman's operation and mine is this: that the "year or two" that he speaks of may be taken as a euphemism for "many years." I think the honourable gentleman has learned that idea from the Natives, who have no idea of time, and who, when they say, "Wait a bit," may mean ten or twenty years. So, when the honourable gentleman says one or two years, he may mean ten or twenty years, and the difference between us is this: that, during the years we are to wait, wait, we must pay out a large amount from the revenue

for Sinking Fund. Now, that is the very thing which I am objecting to, and which I am pro-posing to remedy in this Bill. I say there is no reason why we should not convert at once. There is no reason why the henourable gentleman should not have done so five years ago in respect of these drawing loans. The Act which is already in existence would have been sufficient to do that in regard to the drawing loans. The distinction between my plan and his is this: that, after conversion has taken place, he would have the Sinking Fund as I also would have it; but I should, out of the increases since March last, have to pay off the amounts authorized by this Bill. I say there is no reason why we should go on paying off a large portion of the loans out of revenue. As to the bogies which are held up to honourable members about destroying our credit, and so on. I take leave to have just as strong and as sound an opinion on the subject as the honourable gentleman himself. I take leave to think that, seeing that there is no single colony, so as I am aware, that is paying off its debts -when their debts mature they renew themfact of our taking this course cannot in the test degree impair our credit. Nothing a be more absurd than for us, who are carrywen colonizing operations which will extend over a period of years, to pretend to pay off a perion of our debt, whilst we are at the same time borrowing largely fresh loans. Now, what are these loans for? They are for public works; infact, for railways; and I contend it would be exceedingly mischievous for us, when we have the money available for use, to take it away from industrial pursuits for expenditure on the public works, instead of obtaining necessary funds by borrowing at a low rate of in-test, as we can do in the London money-market. The honourable gentleman seems to tery coolly fastening upon us several of his om children. It appears to me that, as regards the loan indebtedness which we have now to provide for, as shown in the Public Works Statehent, we are very much in the position of having to discharge obligations which devolve apon us from the previous Government. should say, as regards the absolute liabilities which we have to deal with, and which will absorb a very large amount of the new loan, the authorship is not ours; the authorship is the honourable gentleman's. The honourable member rather reminds me of the story of an American audience. In a Western town the people were treated to a representation of "Hamlet," and after it was over they insisted upon calling for the author. The manager went on to the stage to explain, but they would not be content unless the author appeared. So the manager said, "The author is Mr. William Stakespeare, and he has been suddenly called away to New York on business." Like this andience, the honourable gentleman seems to be quite ignorant of the authorship of these habilities; but in reality the authorship be-longs to the honourable gentleman and his colleagues. We have to face obligations, more or less remote, of something like ten millions,

and that is why we have undertaken so few fresh works ourselves. We have to work out what sailors would call "a dead horse" for a long while. Now, the honourable gentleman had a difficulty in understanding the operation of paying off a hundred-pound drawn bond, and I will adopt the kindergarten system of explaining the matter to him. Let us suppose that this piece of blotting-paper is a new bond of £100. I will put that there. This other piece of paper is a drawn bond, which Jones or Brown is fortunate enough to possess, and on the 15th of May he is entitled to receive £100 for it. This other piece of paper we will suppose represents a cheque for £100. It is in the hands of the Treasury. Now, on the 15th March the Treasury has to pay to the Crown Agents £100 to pay off the bond which will be drawn for payment on the 15th May. The Treasury hand it over to the Crown Agents. They have this £100; and when Brown comes on the 15th May he presents his drawn bond for payment. The Crown Agents say to Brown, "There is £100, or a new bond: which do you prefer?" Brown says, "Give me a new bond." Brown takes the new bond, and the Crown Agents pay to the Treasury the £100 for it, retaining them-selves the drawn bond. The Crown Agents say to the Treasury, "Here is your £100." The honourable gentleman will see the working of this. Brown has the new bond, and the Treasury gets the £100 back again. If the honourable gentleman cannot understand that, he is hopeless.

Major ATKINSON. —I am quite hopeless. The fallacy of the honourable gentleman is this: that he assumes that £100, which he describes as being in the form of a cheque, has already been paid off — that that is sinking fund. There is where the fallacy of the whole argument is—the department stands relieved

of that amount.

Sir J. VOGEL. — It is precisely the same thing. If, instead of the £100 being part of the amount received from the Treasury, it is part of the accumulation in the hands of the Crown Agents, it amounts to the same thing: the Treasury receives the money for the new bond which Brown will have. The thing is so simple that I am really surprised at the honourable member not seeing it. I have shown the honourable gentleman how it operates in respect of the drawn bond. I cannot think that anything could be more simple than this: that the Colonial Treasurer is to make a computation each year of the absolute increase of Sinking Fund. The Minister comes down year after year and states what the Sinking Fund is. He says, "Last year it was £2,100,000; this year it is £2,300,000: It has increased by £200,000 during the present year." He shows each year how much the Sinking Fund has increased. The computation is made by the Colonial Treasurer, and verified by the Controller-General, as to the actual increase of the Sinking Fund for that year; and that is the amount of the new stock to be inscribed, created, or converted - whatever term you choose to use; so that it cannot possibly be

the case that a larger amount of new debt is created than actually represents the increase in the Sinking Fund. The computation will each year show the amount of the increase. This year it may be an increase of £240,000; but next year or the year after, if the financial arrangements we propose are carried out in regard to converting a considerable part of our loans, it may be that the Sinking Fund will not increase by more than £150,000. Whatever the amount is, the computation is exact. That meets the honourable gentleman's objection there.

Major ATKINSON.—It does not touch it at

Sir J. VOGEL.—Touching the inheritance of debt to which I have referred, and the honourable gentleman's saying we should wait, and all that, and as to our adjusting the finance in the Loan Bill we are bringing down, it is very painful to find that out or a minion there is only £700,000 for railways and £620,000 there is only £700,000 for railways and £620,000. painful to find that out of a million and a half for roads, bridges, and public buildings. Roads and Bridges Construction Act was not That Act is a most voracious animal; it swallowed up the small loan which the House was persuaded by the honourable member for Egmont to authorize. The honourable gentleman most ingeniously persuaded the House into authorizing that loan. He said, "I do not want the money; but a lot of people want to borrow from the Treasury: let them have this £250,000 in inscribed stock." So the House, thinking they were creating a convenience for capitalists to invest in inscribed stock of the colony, gave him the loan. Then he gives the whole lot to the Post Office, and applies the proceeds to the Roads and Bridges Construction Act; and we have now to vote a similar amount to pay off existing liabilities. honourable gentleman's finance is very unsatisfactory, and we want very much to adjust it. I do not like to see that in a Loan Bill of a million and a half there is only £700,000 for railways. I am free to admit that an adjustment of the finance is required, and we do require to arrive at a conclusion as to how, for what purpose, and to what extent we are to borrow money in future. I might express my admiration of the sublime audacity of those honourable gentlemen in seeing us labouring under the enormous liabilities they have left us, and so coolly casting upon us all the blame, instead of thanking us for undertaking the load they have cast upon us. Now, the honourable gentleman says, "The cry is, to restore your credit by borrowing £240,000 in aid of revenue." That is what the honourable gentleman says. I have pointed out that this Bill does not bear that character; but, supposing we were borrowing £240,000 in aid of revenue, we should only be following a precedent sanctioned by the honourable gentleman himself-only doing on a small scale what he has done on a gigantic one. What is this £1,800,000 of short-dated debentures which the honourable gentleman speaks of as conversion? If I am not mistaken, that was the amount

borrowed by the honourable gentleman in one shape or another to supplement the deficiency in the revenue for ordinary current purposes, and converted by him from a floating to a funded debt. The honourable gentleman says, "You have only to wait a year or two, when all the Sinking Fund will be cleared up by conver-sion." Supposing he is right that we have only to wait a year or two, that would simply mean half a million borrowed in aid of revenue, which would be a very small thing indeed, compared with the gigantic operations in the same direction which my honourable friend has had so much experience in. So, from his point of view, with which I do not agree, it is not open to the objection which the honourable gentleman has stated. I do not wish to throw cold water upon the operations of the late Government; but, when he talks about conversion, the House should bear in mind that what he did was to take £1,800,000, which he had lent to the Trust Funds here at 5 per cent., and change it to inscribed stock at 4 per cent. He simply took off 1 per cent. from the amount which he paid to the Trust Funds for debentures which were never issued publicly, and were held by quasi-Government institutions. It was to an equal extent an operation for issuing in England a new loan as for a conversion. In regard to the 5-30s the same remark is applicable. They could have been called in for payment at par, instead of which it was thought desirable to make the exchange at once; and, instead of par, 34 per cent. premium was given to the holders of the 5-per-cents, and 8 per cent to the holders of the 44 per-cents. These operations tions would have been more successful if the honourable gentleman had not dealt with the 4½-per-cents at all, but had called in the 5-percents for payment, and two or three months afterwards had announced the new loan to take them up, offering to those persons who had to receive payment at par the option of taking the new bonds instead of cash. That would have been a more successful operation. tion. When he talks about succeeding in the conversion, he is aware that the market is blocked with that large mass of 41 per cent. 5-30s which has not yet been placed. As regards the conversion, the honourable gentleman seems to think that it will be disposed of altogether in a year or two; but I am greatly mistaken if it can be done in a year or two Within a reasonable time it may be necessary to convert into 3½ per-cent. stock. Two colonies have already made favourable operations in the way of issuing 31-per-cent. debentures. It must be borne in mind, in considering this question of conversion of stock, that loans which are at a discount, bearing a low rate of interest, have a larger intrinsic value than those at a premium. Many insurance companies and trustees cannot invest in loans at a premium, because they have to account for the capital amount. The time will probably come when it will pay to convert the stock to a 31-per-cent. denomination. Our 4-per-cent. securities are now at a premium, and we may come to the conclusion that the same causes

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that have operated during the last fifteen or [ twenty years will operate again, and that the rate of interest at which the colony can borrow will be still lower than it is at present. I have now dealt with the question as to the supposed increase of the public debt. I have shown to the honourable member that, under this Bill, the public debt will not be increased except to the small extent that increase is authorized under clause 4 for relieving the guarantee debentures: that is to say, the increase in the debt will exactly correspond with the increase in the Sinking Fund. The honourable member has gone through the Bill clause by clause, and I will follow him. With regard to clause 4, the object is this: that, under the Act as it exists, we are not allowed to create a larger amount of debt than the amount of the debt converted, a computation being made in case of a relatively lower rate of interest being paid. It may be, in regard to the guaranteed loans, when they are within two or three years of payment, we might convert even a small portion so as to be able to avoid paying further annual charges—the amount in the Sinking Fund being sufficient to pay off the debt outstanding, with interest. I have shown the honourable gentleman that, contrary to the precedent on former occasions, instead of saying that we will take the Sinking Fund in proportion to the amount we convert, we do not touch the Sinking Fund at all until we leave in the hands of the Sinking Fund Commissioners an amount sufficient to pay the whole of the balance outstanding. Nobody can ask anything more. Supposing, out of a loan of £3,000,000, we convert £2,600,000, leaving £400,000 outstanding, and supposing we have a million of accused Sinking Fund, is there any sane person who would object to our saying, "Well, we will leave the £400,000 on account of the debentures outstanding, and we will take the balance "? As regards clause 10, the honourable gentleman has put his finger on a point which there is no question requires some explanation. He says that the clause gives too large a power to the Colonial Treasurer. He will readily recognize what I mean when I say that there has been by accident omitted from the Bill a clause which makes it necessary that all securities should be signed by the Controller. The instructions were to put in all the clauses relating to short-dated debentures as they appear in the Loan Acts; but this particular clause has been by some accident omitted, and will have to be put in. With regard to the use of the expression "Colonial Treasurer" instead of "Governor in Council," if it is thought better to substitute the latter there can be no objection; but the honourable gentle-man is well aware that, where the expression "Governor in Council" is used as it stands now, it is a mere name, because the Governor in Council delegates the whole of his powers to agents. Now, in this clause it is thought that the Agents for the various Loan Acts should be the Agents under this Bill; and, that being the case, it is not necessary that the Governor in Council should make a special delegation. A great deal of action will have to be taken in

this matter by the Colonial Treasurer in the colony as well as by the Agents outside the colony. There is no objection to inserting a clause providing that the Governor in Council may delegate to the Colonial Treasurer the powers of Agent in the colony which he delegates to the Agents outside the colony. the Bill comes into Committee there will be no objection to limiting the power of the Colonial Treasurer to any extent the Committee may think desirable. The honourable gentleman has proposed that this Bill should be thrown out. Of course that means that our finances should be destroyed, and that not only will the whole amount of the property-tax have to be levied, but that some additional tax will have to be found to meet the expenditure of the year which will expire in four or five months. It is for the House to consider whether that is desirable. It is also for the House to consider whether we should be so fickle as to accept the honourable gentleman's proposals now, seeing that the honourable gentleman did not take this action when the Financial Statement was brought down. The honourable gentleman substantially stated on a former occasion what he has stated to-night. He was then aware of what would be the operations under this Bill. It is quite true that he condemned them; but it is equally true that we secured a vote of fifty-one against four on our financial proposals. A number of honourable gentlemen abstained from voting, as they were afraid it might make the Govern-ment appear too powerful if they had too large a majority. That was the opinion expressed by the House at that time; and is there any reason why it should alter its mind on the question now? The honourable gentleman evidently does not see the effect of our policy on the country, and he is very angry with me that I have entered upon that question. Nevertheless I cannot help doing it, but I will do it in very moderate terms. My statement is this: that the Government do not see their way to adopting the policy of the late Ministry. In connection with the Three-Million Loan the late Government incurred liabilities under the rose, if I may use the expression, for more than was authorized. They left us to provide against liabilities of ten or twelve milions extending over a more or less lengthy period. They always told the House and the country, "We must stop borrowing; borrowing will have to cease;" and the consequence was that honourable members had to scramble year after year for what they could get. their colonizing policy the members of the House were like a number of first-class passengers in a ship, who would behave to each other in the ordinary way prescribed in social life; who would say, "Oh, no, I cannot take this before you: help yourself first;" and so on. But, when you find these passengers in an open boat, tossed about in the sea for many days without food or water, the older naturethe old primeval nature of man—asserts itself, and, if they see a scrap of anything floating about, each person in the boat snatches at it.

Stock Bill.

We ask the House to come out from that primæval period to a period of civilization. We have not been afraid to say to the House that the colonizing policy is not one which is to last for only two or three years. A policy of colonizing is one that should extend beyond our time, and beyond the time of our children and our children's children; it is a policy which a new country must set itself to work out until it has attained the position of an old country with a redundant population. It is utterly absurd that a grand country like New Zealand should be alone amongst the great countries of the earth to want the facili-ties which science has placed at the disposal of man. Sir, we have said this; and the consequence is that the whole country has taken up a different position. We find, now, that members do not pass their time in lamenta-tion. The other day an honourable member I think, the honourable member for St. Albans—described another honourable member as a perfect Jeremiah, always wailing and weeping. The fact is that the attention of the country was diverted from the true duty of colonization and led into purely socialistic questions. The House did not discuss the question of how it could best improve the condition of the colony, but was engaged in considering questions of a speculative character. But the last elections turned on quite a dif-ferent range of subjects. We heard very little of social questions and a great deal of material questions; and it has been really quite refreshing during this session to hear honourable members say, "We want so and so for our districts." It is only a few weeks ago that I suggested that a huge book should be put up in the lobby, and that members should be invited to insert in it the various wants of their districts; and it strikes me that, however large the book might have been, it would have been full before the end of the session. But members are not so much bent upon scrambling for what they can get for their districts as they are bent upon bringing forward the requirements of the dif-ferent parts of the colony. I cannot help thinking that this altered condition of affairs is a healthy one; and, painful as it is to me to have to repeat the expression-knowing as I do the pain it inflicts upon some honourable members who differ with me—still it is my duty to state this whenever it is denied. think I have answered all the objections of the honourable gentleman. As I have said, he has shown nothing that is to be done if this Bill is thrown out. He has asked me to state the need for the Bill, and I answer that it is to fulfil the policy which has been approved by the House. I trust honourable members will come forward and support the Bill as heartily as they supported the financial policy of which this Bill is the outcome. At the same time, I wish to say that I do all justice to the manner in which the honourable member for Egmont has opposed the measure this evening, and generally to his conduct towards the Government during the session. Whilst he Sir J. Voqel

has, as it seems to me—and I am not speakin for myself alone—fulfilled the legitimate fun tions of the leader of the Opposition, he ha abstained from throwing anything like obstru-tion in the way of the Government. Therefor while I differ entirely from the opinions which he has expressed this evening, I must sti bear testimony to the way in which he he proposed the amendment.

Mr. BARRON.—Sir, I had intended to offer few observations on the subject of this Bill but, as the leader of the Opposition has chose to traverse it by an amendment that it be rea a second time this day six months, which it antamount to a vote of want of confidence i the Government, with himself as the alternative, I shall not trespass on the time of the House by going into the subject now. I sha simply say that, as the amendment has bee proposed by the honourable member for Egmor as leader of the Opposition, I cannot vote at the Bill being read a second time this day s months, but I hope I shall have another oppor

tunity of voting against it.

Mr. MONTGOMERY.—I have to expres exactly the same views as the honourable gentleman who has just spoken. This has become a question of confidence or no-confidence or no-confidence. dence, and therefore I shall vote for the secon reading of the Bill.

AYES, 48.

Seddon

Steward, W. J.

Stewart, W. D.

Thompson, T.

Tellers.

Smith

Stout

Sutter

Tole

 $\mathbf{v}_{\mathsf{ogel}}$ Walker

Barron

Shrimski.

Taiaros.

Turnbull

The House divided.

Allwright Lance Ballance Larnach Bevan McKenzie, J. B.-Bradshaw McMillan Brown Montgomery Cadman Moss O'Callaghan Cowan O'Conor Duncan Fraser Ormond Garrick Pere Gillies Pyke

Grigg Reese Richardson, E. White, W. Guinness Harper Richardson, G. Holmes Ross Johnston 4 8 1 Samuel Joyce

Noes, 15. Atkinson Hatch Rolleston Thomson, J. W Bryce Hirst, H. Buchanan Hobbs Tellers. Buckland, W.F. Lake Trimble Fergus Mitchelson Wakefield. Hakuene

PAIRS.

For. Against. Buckland, J. C. Macarthur Coster WilsonDargaville Whyte, J. B. Fisher Dodson Fitzherbert Hursthouse Gore Hurst, W. J. Levestam Conolly Locke Moat Macandrew Russell Mackenzie, M. Fulton

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Morris Pearson Shephard. Peacock Menteath Bruce.

Majority for, 33.

Bill read a second time.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes to two o'clock a.m.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Saturday, 1st November, 1884.

First Readings—Third Reading—Drainage of Mines Bill — Municipal Corporations Bill — Wanganui Harbour Board Empowering Bill.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READINGS.

Beet-root Sugar Bill, Westland Education District Subdivision Bill.

THIRD READING.

Electric Lines Bill.

DRAINAGE OF MINES BILL.
On the motion for the third reading of thi

On the motion for the third reading of this Bill.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN said the persistence with which his honourable friends on the Government benches had pursued this Bill was worthy of a better cause. The opinion of the Council had been, with tolerable distinctness, expressed against this Bill; and he proposed to give the Council, not in Committee of the Whole, but as it was now, another opportunity of expressing an opinion on the subject. The Bill, as it came out of Committee, was in a vary much less objectionable form than when it was first introduced into the Council. The practice; of which this Bill was an example, of making amendments in the general law with a view to the advantage of particular individuals or particular localities, was of so mischievous a character that he invited the Council to express its condemnation of such a practice by declining to read this Bill a third time. No-thing could, to his mind, be worse or more dangerous than such a system. The history of this Bill was curious in some points. A Bill of the same kind, though not exactly with the same name, was introduced in another place in the session of 1888, and, having been referred, in the regular course, to the Gold Fields and Mines Committee, a report—from which he would read an extract—was presented to the House. It was recommended that the Bill should be allowed to pass "provided that it may be brought into force by Proclamation in such mining districts in which the Governor shall be satisfied, upon petition from the miners, that it is generally desired." What was the fate of that Bill? It was dropped instantly. Its promoters dared not appeal to the miners of the district, because they knew very well what would be the answer of the parties affected. As

he had said, the principal point—the gem—of the Bill had been extracted, and what remained now was simply surplusage. The words of the original Act were quite sufficiently clear and distinct to cover all fair purposes, and it had been found to suffice in all instances since the Act was passed, except in the particular one now sought to be satisfied by special legislation on the subject. He was unwilling to say anything more on the subject than to move, as an amendment, That the Bill be read a third time that day six months.

The Council divided on the question, "That the word 'now' stand part of the question."

AYES, 18. Campbell Acland Ngatata Baillie Dignan Reeves Barnicoat Fraser Reynolds Brett Henderson Scotland Buckley, G. Lahmann Wigley Wilson. Buckley, P. A. Martin

Nors, 12.

Bonar Johnson, G. R. Peter
Brandon Johnston, J. Pollen
Chamberlin McLean Richmond, J. C.
Miller Waterhouse.

Majority for, 6.

Bill read a third time.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS BILL.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said it would be remembered that it was not a Government Bill; but, in deference to the expressed desire of the Council, he was moving its second reading. The desire of the Council was that the Government should make itself responsible for amendments of the Municipal Corporations Act. Well, there were some sections of this Bill which he thought were improvements on the present law, but there were others on which there might be great diversity of opinion, and, if the Council consented to read the Bill a second time, he would offer no objection in Committee to striking out such sections as might involve any considerable amount of discussion, or to which there was strong opposition. It was impossible for the Government this session to introduce a new amending Bill, and the only course, therefore, was for the Government to take up this Bill, and to introduce in Committee such amendments as were really considered advisable at the present time. He trusted, therefore, the Council would read the Bill a second time, with a view to its amendment in Committee.

Bill read a second time.

## WANGANUI HARBOUR BOARD EM-POWERING BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Proposed new clause.—When resolution to be deemed to be carried.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY moved, That the word "exercisable" be struck out, with a view to insert the word "exercised."

The Committee divided on the question, "That the word 'exercisable' be retained."

AYES, 14.

Native Lands

Acland Bonar Brandon Grace Hart

McLean Miller Peacock  $\mathbf{Pollen}$ 

Scotland Waterhouse Wigley Williamson.

Richmond, J.C. Noes, 10.

Barnicoat Buckley, P. A. Campbell Dignan

Fraser Henderson Kohere

Ngatata Reynolds Wilson.

Majority for, 4.

Amendment negatived. Bill reported.

The Council adjourned at half-past four o'clock p.m.

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Saturday, 1st November, 1884.

Third Reading—Native Lands Settlement Bill—Tim-ber-floating Bill—New Zealand Loan Bill—Prober-floating Bill—New Zealan perty-Tax Bill—Adjournment.

Mr. Spraker took the chair at eleven o'clock. PRAYERS.

THIRD READING.

Impounding Bill.

NATIVE LANDS SETTLEMENT BILL. Mr. SPEAKER directed the Serjeant-at-Arms to inform the chief Wahanui that the House was now ready to hear him with respect to the petition presented to the House on this

The chief WAHANUI then addressed the

Mr. BALLANCE.—Sir, I rise to move the second reading of the Native Lands Settlement Bill, and in doing so I will briefly refer to the speech that has just been made at the bar of the House. I think that it must be admitted that a great advance has been made in Native affairs in this colony when a powerful and in-fluential chief like Wahanui has come here to speak the wishes of himself and his people before the representatives of New Zealand. There is no doubt that the speech which has just been made expressed, from beginning to end, most friendly sentiments, and an anxious desire to meet this Legislature in proposing legislation which, at any rate, will be of benefit to the Native people, and not hostile to the colonists. Sir, I was very much struck indeed with the noble sentiments expressed by Wahanui in his speech, and I may say that I agree with almost everything he said. Of course, in referring to the Native Lands Settlement Bill, he naturally took a not altogether favourable view of some of the provisions of the measure; but that, it appears to me, was more in consequence of a want of familiarity with those provisions than from anything contained in them. He said that the Bill had sharp teeth and a sting. Well, Sir, it appears to me that the provisions of this Bill, when thoroughly under-

stood, are calculated in the fullest sense to protect the best interests of the Natives. Of course we may differ—the Natives may differ from myself and from others who support this Bill—with regard to the nature of the principles of the measure, and with regard to the effects they are calculated to produce; and I at once admit that, where there is a want of appreciation of a measure of this kind on the part of the Native people, that in itself is a good reason why we should proceed cautiously and tentatively in measures which may not be understood and may not be appreciated. The tendency of Wahanui's speech seemed to be that the Natives desire for themselves power to deal with their own lands, and he made reference to a movement which is now going on among the Native people—a movement, I may say, which is calculated to place in their hands the fullest privileges of self-government with respect to dealing with their own lands. That movement has gone in the direction of the formation of Native Committees. It appears to me that this movement is but in its infancy. The Natives from one end of the Island to the other seem very much inclined to take up the Bill which was passed two sessions ago for the appointment of Native Committees, and to come under the working of that measure. It is, I think, a great advance when an influential chief like Wahanui comes to this House and makes a proposal to provide legislation and means to deal with their own property. That appears to be a very strong reason why we should proceed with great caution in a matter of this kind, so that we may understand their feelings and their wants before we proceed to legislation which may not be altogether acceptable to them. With regard to the sale of spirits, I may inform the House that, in consequence of a petition unanimously signed by almost the whole of the Natives in the Waikato, instructions have been given to bring the prohibitive clauses of the Licensing Act into force throughout the King country, and that is to be done with the almost unanimous assent of the Natives in that country. ceeding to explain the principles of the Bill under consideration, I would first of all bring before the notice of the House what appear to be the cardinal features of the measure. In the first place, the Bill prohibits absolutely, within a certain defined territory, the dealing in Native lands by private individuals. It may appear to the House that, in preventing undue speculation on the part of private individuals in the country to which the railway will be the feeder, and which the railway will enormously benefit, we have gone too far and taken in more than we ought to have done. It was the intention, in the first instance, to take land within a certain distance of the railway-line; but gradually our views became expanded, and we thought that—if we were to do justice to the colony, and, at the same time, to the Native people — we should take in at any rate that extent of country which would be served by the railway. We then thought that the best boundaries we could

make would be the boundaries enclosing the watershed in connection with the North Island Railway, and I took a map and traced a line in order to give to the railway that land which seemed to be benefited by it. I had an interview with Wahanui, and his inclination seemed to be to take in and reserve from private dealings not only the land which was likely to be benefited by the railway, but the whole of the Waikato, including his lands. I believe I interpret his views very fully when I say that I think the wish of Wahanui is to include the land the boundaries of which are marked off on the map which is now before the House. So that we have made an important advance in getting his assent to the prohibition of private dealings in Native land in this country. We have therefore prohibited private dealings in land within those boundaries; but we have gone a step further and have taken the power, by Proclamation, to bring other parts of the country also within the powers of the Bill. By Proclamation we have power, upon the application of the Natives themselves, to include under the operation of the Bill any portion of territory they may desire to bring under it. It appears to me that is a desirable thing, because, while it does not force the Bill, at any rate, upon other parts of the colony, it does provide, in case the leading chiefs are willing to come under the operation of the measure, the means to enable them to do so. Well, the next thing we have done is this: We have taken power—and this is the second principle of the Bill—with the consent of the Natives, to bring their lands under the administration of the Government, the Government acting as agents for the Natives. This is certainly not a new principle; it is one that was introduced to this House in the Native Land Sales Bill in 1880. It was then sought to make the Government the agents for dealing with the Native lands, with the consent of the owners—that is to say, bringing all the Native lands of the colony within the powers of the legislation we provide. This, perhaps, is one of the principles of the measure to which Wahanui has alluded; but it must be remembered that we do not, in this case, force the Natives to have their lands administered by the Government. Having prohibited all traffic and interference on the part of private individuals, the next step is to wait until the Natives are willing to come under the Act. If they think the Government, by means of a Board properly constituted, can administer their lands for their benefit, I have no doubt they will apply to the Government to have their land brought under the Act. The first thing, however, is to convince the Native owners that the administration of the land will be safe in the hands of the Government. I am aware that at the present moment some of the Natives are not prepared to bring their lands under such a measure; but I am certain that the greater number of the Native owners of the land within the boundaries prescribed by the Bill are willing, and indeed are most anxious, to bring their lands within the compass of this

measure. I have received a communication from the Mayor of New Plymouth with regard to this particular subject, in which he expresses the following opinion: "that it is of the utmost importance that the Government should take immediate steps to open up the Mokau country, as the Natives are willing and desirous that such should be done." I believe the Natives themselves will be prepared to accede to the issuing of the Proclamation and bling their lands to be benefit with the state of the proclamation. enabling their lands to be brought under the operation of this Act. I have had repeated communications from the principal chiefs in the lower part of the Wanganui country, and I believe that a large portion of them will be anxious to place their lands in the hands of the Government, for the purpose of administration and settlement. I am aware that there is a difference of opinion between the people represented by Wahanui and the people residing in the Lower Wanganui country on this particular point; but I feel that if this measure is passed into law it will give the Natives confidence in having their lands brought under the administration of the Government. I may observe that this Bill is only of a tentative character. There is no doubt that a more comprehensive measure will have to be introduced, making provision for other matters than those included in this Bill. It is the intention of the Government next session to bring down such a measure. appears to me that we have, under this Bill, made such provision as will meet all temporary wants. We have given to the Native Land Court full power to give effect to the wishes of the owners of Native lands by adjudicating upon them at the request of a tribe, or a hapu, or a single Native; and the Court will have full power to vest the land in a tribe, or a hapu, or an individual Native. The Bill provides for the appointment of a Board to administer these lands. It will consist of a Commissioner appointed by the Governor, and of assessors nominated by him. This provision, I may say, is only of a provisional nature, for I consider that any Board that will be satisfactory to the Natives must consist largely of members elected by the Natives—persons who represent them and their interests, and who enjoy their full confidence. I am sure that, after the statement made by Wahanui, the Natives would not be content with any Board otherwise constituted, and I think this House must be prepared, when the time comes, to give to them extensive powers with regard to the administration of the land, and larger powers in the election of members of the Board. It is provided in this Bill that half the proceeds of the land, and the rents derived from the land, shall be handed over to the owners, and that not more than half the gross proceeds shall be retained for the purpose of making roads and surveys, and for other expenses connected with the Court and with the administration of the land. I know that it is the opinion of some Natives that we have taken too large a share of their property for the administration of their lands. They say, "Why should you retain one-

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half the proceeds of the land?" The answer to that is, "We shall spend no more on this purpose than is absolutely required, and what is not spent shall be handed over to the Natives."
It must be remembered that, if we spend a certain amount of money in making roads and surveying the land, the land will be enhanced in value in proportion to that expenditure. Perhaps the whole of the Native owners may not be prepared to accede to this, and I admit that some arrangement might be made for dealing with the owners of any particular block of land. It does seem at first sight too large a proportion of the value of the land, and some slight modification might be made in the direc-tion I have indicated. But, if we spend money in opening up the land by means of roads and by carrying out other improvements, the land will be largely enhanced in value, and the Native owners will receive the benefit in the increased price that will be obtained for the land. There is a provision in the Bill with regard to Native reserves, and, although it does not refer particularly to the country over which Wahanui has mana or jurisdiction, yet it is a provision that appears to me to be required at the present time, and we consider it of great importance. I have found, during my short experience of the Native Department, that there are reserves all over the country, some of which have restrictions upon them, and some of which have no restrictions upon them. In my opinion these reserves are in process of being alienated from the Native people. Day after day applications come in to the Native Department from people who desire to have the restrictions removed from the Maori lands, and they come in with the strongest recommendations from officers of the department in the various districts, to the effect that the restrictions ought to be removed, because the Natives have sufficient land otherwise to live upon. I say that the removal of these restrictions is an improper use of power, and ought to be stopped at once: and, with the exception of carrying out previous engagements, I have determined, so far as I am concerned, not to consent to the removal of any more restrictions until the Legislature has laid down some definite policy on the subject. Those who are desirous of acquiring these reserves are not always content to wait until the restrictions are removed before commencing negotiations for obtaining them. In the great majority of instances the work is done, the purchase is completed, before the removal of the restrictions, and even the money has been paid; and the purchasers wait until a favourable moment comes when they can bring sufficient influence or pressure to bear upon the Government, so as to have the restrictions removed. We had an instance here yesterday of a reserve—a most valuable reserve, from a mineral point of view—consisting of 89,000 acres. This land passed into the hands of a private individual for the sum of £10,000. I believe that reserve, instead of being worth only £10,000, is worth at least £100,000. I consider that a gross abuse—a gross wrong—has taken place in allowing that reserve to pass into the

hands of private individuals. I am not making reflections upon our predecessors; I am only saying that the power of dealing with this land was placed in the hands of one man, who is responsible to no one, who is responsible net even to the Government of the day - in the hands of the Native Lands Frauds Commissioner. He has large powers conferred upon him. He has the privilege and the legal right of transferring property of that kind from the hands of the Natives to private individuals, without competition, without the public knowing anything about it. I do maintain that there ought to be a power in some Act to enable the Government, where they see that it is not desirable or judicious to acquire the land for the colony, to forbid its alienation, and save it from spoliation, and from passing into the hands of private individuals. In this particular case, the Natives were desirous of selling the land, and the County Council desired the Government to purchase it. The Government did not desire to purchase it, because it was represented as not being fit for settlement, although the land was rich in minerals, rich in harbours, and rich in other respects. The land was open to private negotiations, which were commenced. The Native Lands Frauds Commissioner's consent being required, I suppose the necessary amount of pressure was brought to bear, and his assent was given. I maintain that abuses of this character ought not to be possible, and that we should prevent them. There is a feature in the Bill with regard to which I am doubtful as to whether we should adopt such a policy at the present time. It is a power to enable the Government to advance money to Natives who may be desirous of selling their land, and thus enable them to bring it under the jurisdiction of this Act. A provision of a similar character was included in the Act of 1880. I am somewhat doubtful as to the expediency of adopting such a provision at present. I do not care about large powers being vested in the Governor in Council. We have in this measure, to my mind, an extremely useful provision for enabling the Native lands to be administered, and which might, with benefit, be brought into force in the district described in this Bill, and other districts outside its boundary. two opposing principles at work in the colony with regard to the administration of Native lands. The one principle is represented by what I may call the free-traders in Native lands—people who are well versed in Native customs, who know the Native language, and who are, in fact, familiar with Native usages. They are exceedingly desirous of having what is called power of individualization—they wish to give the Court the largest power of cutting out individual rights. Not only that, but they would allow European lessees to deal with the owners - the Native lessors - individually thus enabling the Europeans to purchase small pieces of a block of land from particular individuals, until gradually they shall have so quired the freehold of the whole block. If the object in view is simply to alienate lands from

the Natives and to place them in the hands of private individuals, allowing them to be held under Crown grant just as land is held which has been alienated from the Crown, I believe that no better plan than that could possibly be adopted. It seems to me that, if we are to get the lands out of the hands of the Native holders, we must give the Native Land Court large powers of cutting out individual rights and ascertaining individual titles. But whether this is good policy is entirely a different matter. I think that policy is connected with a great deal that is wrong in our dealings with the Native people. Our object is not to divide and conquer; our object is not to wrest from the Natives their land without their full and intelligent consent, but rather to enable them to consider the matter fully and clearly, and with knowledge of all the circumstances, and then enable them to deal with their land for their own benefit, and not for the benefit of private dealers and speculators. I now come to the opposite principle, which is urged by the advocates of what is called the "tribal" policy. That is the principle advocated by those who wish to see large powers vested in the tribe. They contend that tribes or hapus should be incorporated—they even go so far as to say that the owners of a particular piece of land should have the opportunity of being incorporated, and that, as a corporation, the tribe or hapu, or the owners of a particular piece of land, should have the power of dealing with the land. I think that these people are going in the right direction, at any rate from the Native point of view. I find, from conversation with the most intelligent Natives, that they are very anxious to have this power of dealing with their lands; and I approve of the principle, for this reason: that it remits to the united intelligence of the tribe in council the power of determining what ought to be done with the land; and this consensus of the opinion of the tribe or hapu is more likely to be right and sound than an expression of opinion by an individual chief, no matter how able a man he may be. An expression of opinion man he may be. An expression of opinion made by an individual Native as to what ought to be done with the land must, it appears to me, be less valuable, because he is or may be taken in his weakest moment. put in a most unfavourable situation for expressing a calm, clear, and deliberate judgment; and we should not encourage a system under which those who have the power of alienating the property of others as well as their own may be placed in a situation where they will be liable to temptation, and may be wrongly persuaded to alienate and part with the property. I will say this, however: that no particular proposal has yet been made by either of these two classes of advocates with regard to the administration of Native land which, in my opinion, should be adopted in its entirety; but I am inclined to think that the policy of the advocates of tribal rights aproximates far more closely to sound policy than anything which has been brought forward by the advocates of the opposite principle.

Then I come to the question of the Native Land Court. Wahanui, in his speech, referred. to the Native Land Court in a manner which. implied a want of confidence in it; and I must. say I have observed that the Native Land Court has not given satisfaction to the Native people. But it must be remembered that no Court, however constituted, can be expected to give complete satisfaction to the Native people. There are, of course, two parties to every suit. Each party comes before the Court with the conviction that he has justice on his side, and the losing party must always feel keenly dis-satisfied with the judgment of the Court. Again, no European tribunal adjudicating in. reference to the ownership of Native property can ever be entirely successful, because, according to Native custom, there never has been in. the past individual right to property in the sense in which we understand it. The customs of the Natives of this colony, like the customs of all primitive people, are socialistic and com-munistic. They hold land in common, and any Court which does not recognize their socialistic customs would fail to give satisfaction to the Natives. If you go on to a block of land and ask the people living on it. who are the owners, the first man you meet, however small or insignificant a man he may be in the tribe or hapu, will tell you, "This is my country; I have been living here so long.' But he does not lay claim to the territory by any individual right; he does not set up any exclusive right; but he claims as one of a number who are interested in the land according to Native custom: and if you met. another claimant, and if the question were put to him, you would get the same answer from. him, and he would not at all characterize the claims of the other man as absurd. So I say that, in dealing with this question, we must remember that we cannot expect to please the Natives absolutely, and we should make large allowances for the difficulties which the Court has to encounter. I do not mean to say that the Court has given satisfaction, but I do not agree that it has broken down. I freely admit that it has not given satisfaction to the Native people; but I think, with a few amendments in the present law, it would be the best tribunal that we could have at the present time. It is supposed by a number of people who are well versed in this question that, if the Natives had power to appoint committees to determine titles, those committees would be far more likely to arrive at a sound conclusion as to the real facts in connection with claims than the Native Land Court. There is a good deal to be said for that, and a good deal to be said on the other side, because it must be remembered that any committee, however appointed, must be connected with people who have conflicting interests before the Court, and it is almost impossible to have a committee so constituted that the rights of a minority, having perhaps but a small voice in the election of the committee, would be fairly considered. It seems to me that we must preserve, in connection with this Native Land Court, the prin-

ciples which guide our English jurisprudence. We must have a Court above suspicion, and a Court bringing to the performance of its duties a large knowledge of the customs and habits of the people; and that Court must be entirely above intimidation on the one hand, and bribery on the other. I do not think that the Native Land Court has broken down, and I believe it can be used very beneficially as an instrument for the determination of title, whether the title to be ascertained is that of individual right, or hapu or tribal right. And therefore I think that the Court is an institution that must remain amongst us as long as Native title requires to be ascertained. As to the Native Committees, I think that, with slightly larger powers than they have, they might perform some very useful functions. They might act as a Court of first instance, allowing the Native Land Court to act as a Court of That, I think, is the direction in Appeal. which our legislation should point. gone through most of the features of the Bill, I might refer to the land contained in the schedule; and I will give the House a few figures showing exactly the position of the There are about four million acres affected. We have already prohibited private persons dealing with that land, with the consent not only of the people living in that territory, but we have the consent of Wahanui, Kemp, and the Natives in the lower part of Wanganui. As far as I am aware, we have the consent of the great body of the Native people. The following statement shows the position of affairs in regard to the land :-

Native Lands

1	Acres.
Lands sold by Natives to Euro-	
peans	11,166
Lands proclaimed undernegotiation	
of purchase by the Government	730,628
Lands still held by the Natives	10,000
Lands leased by the Government	129,148
Crown lands	131,072
Lakes	96,256
Lands held by Natives over which	•
the Native title has not been in-	
vestigated by the Native Land	
Court	3,519,915

Total area within schedule

4,628,185

Acres.

Area within belt 2 chains wide along central route

8,360 That is the whole of the land in this territory. Some is already in the hands of the Government, and can be dealt with under the land laws of the colony. Some of the land has been leased by the Government from the Natives, and has been re-leased again to Europeans; some of the land is still under negotiation; but the great bulk is land which has not been dealt with, and has not passed through the Native Land Court. It has been said that, were we to urge the Natives, we might receive 'large concessions of land from them as a recogmition of the value given to their land by the railway. Of course it may be that they will take that view, and it would be a generous Mr. Ballance

thing on their part to do so, and the Government would be ready to meet them with thanks for their liberality; but anything in the nature of coercion, anything in the nature of force, I utterly disclaim. We have no more right to use coercion directly or indirectly to secure concessions from the Natives in respect of their lands than we have in the case of Europeans, and any concession on the part of the Natives must be voluntary and of their own accord. The matter will be put to them, but these sentiments will at the same time be expressed. With regard to the land required for the railway-line, 3,360 acres, from conversations I have had with Natives who have the largest influence and power in that country, I am persuaded that the Natives will at once come forward and offer to us the whole of the land required for the line of the railway. has expressed himself in that direction; so have many of the Natives in the Lower Wanganui district: and I therefore think there will be no difficulty in getting a reasonable amount of land for the site of the railway. I have now gone through the main principles of the measure, and explained our object. I recognize, and recognize at once, the strong disinclination on the part of Wahanui and the people who recognize him as their counsellor and guide to accept this measure, except so far as the prohibition clauses are concerned, until they have had an opportunity of discussing its principles among themselves. I can understand that Wahanui's great influence would be much lessened amongst his people if we were to pass laws which had not been considered by them, and which had not been talked over amongst them. Now, I think that that is a feeling which we should very largely take into account, and should recognize as a powerful factor in the future in dealing with this territory. I feel assured that the system proposed by this measure, and its machinery, are the means best adapted for securing to the Natives the best price for their land, and its right administration; but, while I feel that, I at the same time recognize that it might be better if the machinery part of the Bill were allowed to remain over till next session, when a complete measure may be brought down; and I propose on the present occasion to ask the House to do no more than read this Bill a second time, with the object, in Committee, of striking out the clauses which provide the machinery for dealing with the land. We propose to confine the Bill to the prohibition clauses, and to defer the provisions dealing with land administration till next seesion. The schedule of the Bill will stand, and the prohibition clauses will remain, or, rather, we shall propose to put them in a more com-plete form than as they now stand. I there-fore propose to take the second reading to-day, if the House will permit it, and on Tuesday to bring down clauses which will better effect the main object of the Bill. I will conclude by remarking that in my opinion the Native people are inclined to repose a large amount of confidence in the Government, and that confidence can only be retained if in our

dealings with the Native people we act openly and straightforwardly, and show no desire to deprive them of their rights, or to impair those rights; and that is the principle on which I intend to act as long as I may remain at the head of the department. I believe we enjoy their confidence, and I am willing to admit that the state of affairs prevailing throughout New Zealand with regard to the Natives has been contributed to by the policy of my pre-decessor. It was a policy which I did not alto-gether agree with; I dissent from it in many matters of detail: but, on the whole, it was a policy in my opinion calculated to secure the confidence of the Native people generally. I thought that policy harsh in many respects; but, if there was one thing the Natives were made clearly to understand, it was this: that the will, at any rate, of the Government was inflexible, that it was their intention to act straightforwardly, and that they had no desire to do wrong to the Native people with regard to their lands. But I believe that the policy of the future should differ from the policy of the past in this respect: that it should be a policy of settlement of their country. That is the main question. The Natives have arrived at the point at which they are able to see that it is, in their own interest, highly desirable that their land should be thrown open, and that they should enjoy the benefit of its occupation. I believe now, if we take them into our confidence, and show them that the object of our administration and the object of every piece of legislation we pass affecting their lands, which are dearer to them than anything else in the world, is to deal with them fairly and justly, we shall have them co-operating with the Government in the administration of their lands, and that before many years are over we shall see not only railways, but settlement, spread through their country from one end to the other, contributing largely to their own welfare and to the stability and prosperity of the colony.

Colonel FRASER.—I desire to ask a question, before the debate is proceeded with. What do you propose to do with those people who now hold leases from the Natives, and have had the land surveyed and have occupied it?

Mr. BALLANCE.—Anything we do will not in the slightest degree prejudice existing legal rights. Those will have to be dealt with in the future. I should be the last to propose any measure calculated to take away from any one legal rights to which he was entitled.

Mr. PERE.—I wish to speak with regard to the measure now before the House. I wish to speak the more because it is a matter which affects the Native people very deeply. I wish to show this House the ideas the Maoris have on this subject. It is the wish of the Natives that a just law should now be passed. During past years all legislation with respect to the Natives has been carried out by Europeans only. The result of these laws has been that all Native lands have passed away. Now, with regard to the measure brought in by the Native Minister, I object to some of the provisions, and think they should be struck out. Although

the Europeans may consider these provisions good, still the Maoris think otherwise. reason of that is perhaps that they are not acquainted with the law. One objection is that there are many previous Acts incorporated in this measure, and it may be that many obnoxious or stringent measures will be incorporated with the one now before the House. The Maoris' idea with regard to matters affecting this land is as follows: that a new Native land law should be passed. The present laws with regard to the Native Land Court are not satisfactory to the Natives. I will give one instance. When the sittings of a Land Court are appointed, the Court opens, and the Natives assemble before the Court; the claimants are asked to state their case, and they do so, giving all the grounds of their claim, whether by ancestry, by conquest, or otherwise. After that is done the counterclaimants make their plans accordingly, and decide what evidence they shall offer in support of their respective claims. Another thing that is done is to place several hundred persons in a certificate of title. The result is, the land is locked up and cannot be used for the benefit of the people who own it. They cannot make the same good use of it as the Europeans make of their own lands. That is why the Maori people think that some new and better laws should hereafter be devised, under which the whole of the lands mentioned in the Bill before the House could be administered, together with other Native lands. That. is the first thing to be considered during the recess. Another matter to be considered is the appointment of Native Committees to administer their own lands. The decisions of a Committee would have no effect unless they were indorsed by the owners of the soil. They could only be confirmed by the owners. Of course this Committee is composed of owners of the land. By this means the authority over the lands would be retained by the owners. and the bulk of the people would direct the Committee as to what should be done. Power should also be taken to give the Nativos authority to provide Land Boards to administer the lands, such Boards to consist of three members each, the Natives to select two and the Government to nominate one. The Government would then be in a position to assist the Natives in doing what was best in regard to the land. The Maoris will never consent to the Government having absolute control to sell or lease it without the consent of the Natives being first obtained. The Maoris will not place that power even in the hands of their own Committees. They will not consent to a Board going so far as that; but it is for the bulk of the people to decide whether the land is to be sold or not. duty of the Committee would simply be to carry out the wish of the bulk of the people. The Committee would be able to advise the respective Boards what should be done. If the land were administered after this fashion, it would be well: then the selling of land by individuals would be done away with abso· lutely. I think the only satisfactory arrangement that could be devised at present affecting Wahanui's land would be, first, to stop the Court; secondly, to stop the surveys, and also the selling and leasing. That is all that should be done at present; but afterwards, when a good law has been passed—that is, with the approval of the Native people-then it will be time to go further. Do not let the Government pass any measure that the Government alone would devise; let that be done jointly by the Government and the Natives. Let the Government consult with the Maori land-owners, and devise a law which the Native Minister could bring to this House for confirmation. This House will then be able to give effect to it. Do not let this House, when that law is brought before it, alter it by various amendments, and destroy its effect; for this reason: that this will be the first time that the experiment has been made of allowing the Natives to make their own laws. This House should reflect that the Europeans have obtained at least thirty million acres of this country; and they ought to be satisfied with that land for the present, and leave the remainder of the land that still belongs to the Natives to be administered by the Natives; so that, if there is trouble, the trouble that results hereafter will not be the fault of the Government or of this House, but it will be brought on by the Natives. I think the Bill introduced by the Hon. the Native Minister should only prevent the leasing and selling of land in the King country at present. Let it be altered. I would ask that the second reading of this Bill be delayed until next Tuesday, so that certain alterations may be made in it—so that Wahanui may be consulted, and effect given to his wishes by new clauses. If the Bill is allowed to pass in its present form, great fear will come upon the Natives within Wahanui's district, and I think that it will do more harm than good; it will only cause delay in the settle-ment of the land. But if, on the contrary, this measure carries out Wahanui's wishes, then the Government will have his support, and the land will speedily be placed on a satisfactory basis. It should be considered that the land in Wahanui's district is in a different position from other Native lands in various parts of New Zealand. I hardly get hold of what the Native Minister said with regard to the removal of restrictions from Native lands. I think, as he does, that the Natives are in a destitute position—they are in an unhappy position at present. I will also uphold another thing that the Native Minister has said—not to use coercion with the Natives. Let him carry out that spirit in his Bill. I approve of these words of his; let him give effect to them in the Bill now before the House. It should be considered that the Natives in various parts of New Zealand are in great trouble. I carnestly ask and hope that all the present evil will be done away with. I do not think this House should pass the Bill in its present state. I think it should be altered. If it passes in its

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ask and will persuade different Natives to have the Act brought into force in their re-spective districts. I, together with the people in my district, are quite content that the Government should help us to carry out our wishes with respect to the land: we have confidence in the Government to that extent; but the first arrangement should rest with the Natives. The reason I ask this is that Europeans are a far-seeing race; and it is not as if one Ministry always remained in power: there are constant changes in the Ministry, and, consequently, constant changes in the law. The next Minister may perhaps alter the whole state of the law. That is why I say that the authority over the land should remain with the Natives absolutely; and the whole of the administration of the land should be based upon the consent of the Maoris, in the first place. I approve of what the Native Minister has said with regard to leaving the machinery part of this Bill to stand over till next session; but let the Bill be adopted to some extent, to prevent trouble upon the land in the meantime. This should be done, because people are now endeavouring to buy certain lands in one particular district, and they have applied for a sitting of the Native Land Court. When the late Native Minister and myself were at Whatiwhatihoe some time ago, he then prevented certain surveys and plans being made. This is why I consider steps should be taken immediately to consider Wahanui's representations to this House. His request in coming to this House is this: He says to the Government, "Keep back your dogs from coming and killing my sheep." He means by this that the Government should restrain those Europeans who desire to go on to his country and cause trouble. Wahanui knows that he is powerless of himself to prevent these Europeans from going through his country. If Wahanui were to take upon himself to stop these people from going through, the Na-tive Minister, on the other hand, would be strenuous in telling them to go on. I have thought fully of what Wahanui has said, and I think the Minister should take steps to prevent those evils complained of being brought upon that district. Let a fence be placed round his land, and, if the gate is to be opened to let any one in upon the land, let it be done by the owner of the soil: let him open the gate himself. To recapitulate what I have said: first, the Native Land Court; secondly, the Committee to administer the various blocks; thirdly, experienced and trustworthy persons to administer the Native lands, and certain other measures to encourage the Natives to make good use of their lands, to encourage them to be prosperous like the Europeans, so that they may follow in the footsteps of the Europeans, because the cause of prosperity amongst the Europeans is the various combinations that at present exist amongst them: that is the true cause of their prosperity. Do not let the Government take to itself altogether the authority over the Native lands; let the Government be content with the present shape, badly-disposed Europeans will taxes and the revenues raised from those lands.

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According to the old Native custom, the chiefs derived all the benefit from the land: that is by giving them the fruits of the soil. The fatness of the land went to the chiefs. Now all the fatness is taken by the Government, and it goes to the Queen. I think the Europeans should be satisfied with that, and leave to the Native Committees to say what shall be dene in the way of settling the land by put-ting Europeans on it. Of course the Government should have some voice in that matter also; but the greatest part of the administra-tion should rest with the Natives. Look at the great power which has been placed in the hands of the Chief Judge of the Native Land Court. He is the sole arbiter whether a claim to the land is to be reheard or not, and great trouble has come on various Natives in consequence. Look at the number of petitions that have come before the Native Affairs Committee in consequence, asking for a rehearing. Now, I am a member of that Committee, and I find that the Committee has no power in the matter at all. The whole of the power rests with the Chief Judge, and the result is that great evils have come upon the Native people. hardly to be expected that, if the Chief Judge hears a claim in the first instance, a rehearing will be granted. So, also, if the whole of the power rested with the Government, and they could sell or lease or dispose of Native lands without consulting the Natives, the result would be that great trouble would come upon the Natives. It might be that one Government would carry out the administration of Native lands satisfactorily, and that another might do just the reverse. When the Natives go to complain of the wrong which has been done to them, the Europeans just whistle and walk away. Now, if the Native chiefs were in authority over the land, there they would remain from their birth until their death there would be no change; so that, if any of those chiefs did wrong, such pressure would be brought to bear upon them that they would die from very shame. It is quite different with Europeans: they do not feel shame. They forget all about it. They are like stone images -the blush is never to be seen on their faces. Their love is all outside; but their hearts are hearts of stone. Their words are pleasant to the face; but they turn away and forget all about what they have said. They sometimes say, "We will do everything that is good for you;" and then somebody else comes to speak to them, and they forget all about it. I beg of the House to remember that they have had all the voice in the past; and what remains in the future, leave to us Maoris. If our wishes are given effect to, then prosperity will come upon us. If prosperity comes upon the Maoris I will not say that it is only the Government who have caused it, but I will thank the whole of the members of the House for it, and will say that it is owing to their efforts. I think a great matter in this House is voting. Everything is carried by the majority, whether

different from the Maori ideas. That is European institution; the Maoris do not approve of it, for it is not a good arrangement at all. But, if a good law is now passed, I will thank the House that now for the first time light has been thrown on the Maori people. Then I shall think that the efforts of this House are directed to relieving the weak and suffering. That will be like affording relief to hospitals and charitable institutions. Former laws we can only compare to the work of a doctor who performs certain operations to find out what is wrong with a patient, and causes great pain in doing so. I have spoken of the provisions of the Bill before the House relating to the preserving of the lands owned by Wahanui.

Mr. TE AO.—Mr. Speaker, I am much pleased that Wahanui has been allowed to appear at the bar of the House. It appears to me that it is quite a new departure allowing a person from outside to bring his grievances before the House. That is all I have to say with regard to that. I will now refer to what the Native Minister has stated in his speech. My honourable friend who has just sat down has made so long a speech that I have forgotten some of the statements of the Native Minister, but I will speak with regard to those I remember. After I have alluded to his speech I will refer to the Bill before the House. The Native Minister stated that some of the troubles brought upon the Natives were due to the action of a former Government. I heartily indorse that statement; but that quite contradicts the view now before the House. I have heard what Wahanui has said—that this Bill has very long and sharp teeth. I believe that some of the members of the late Government will object to some of the provisions of this Bill. First, as to this word in the Bill: "half-castes." Now, I think that word has a very wide meaning; and there will be a great deal of trouble with regard to it. The word may be applied to horses. The meaning of that word will be brought into effect over the Native lands. Another meaning of that term is one that applies to half-castes between all races. There are half-caste Chinamen in this country, and there are half-caste negroes. Does this Bill mean that all these shall be brought under the Native Lands Act? I think this term should be used of those who are half Europeans and half Maoris. I think that the Europeans should show love to those people, because they are half European. Do not let the maintenance of these half-castes be left entirely to the Natives. The Europeans claim descent from their ancestors, just as the Maoris do; and I think the Europeans should consider what should be done for the benefit of the half-castes, and not leave it altogether to the Natives. Now with regard to certain provisions in the Bill before the House. One provision is this: that Maori land and Crowngranted land shall be subject to this law. I think this is wrong. I think that this law should only apply to Crown-granted land, and that the Native land should not be brought under all these various laws. Let the House it is a good law or a bad law. That is quite consider this. But, if the Crown-granted land

is to be excluded, then the Native land should be excluded also. These Native lands we have inherited from our ancestors, and they are held according to Native custom. I do not think that they should be affected by the law. That is why I object to this clause. I think it should be struck out. I object also to rates being collected on Native lands. I object to rates being raised from those lands for the sake of paying the debt of the colony. I think that the Rating Act is one of the worst measures passed by this House. The former Government never did anything of this sort. The former Government excluded Native lands from the provisions of the Rating Act. The Government, seeing the number of petitions presented by Natives, are hurrying through with this Bill. There is one clause I should like to refer to, and that is the last. I object to this clause. I do not think it right. I agree with Wahanui that, if that clause is given effect to over Native land—over common land—there will be trouble. During the time of past Governments, various Ministers went to see Tawhiao. Tawhiao always said, "Leave the authority over my district with me; also the carrying out of the arrangements of roads and surveys and other matters." I think that the passing of this Bill should be deferred. I think it should be put off until next session. Let the Minister meet face to face with Tawhiao and all his people, so that an opportunity may be given to Tawhiao of agreeing or otherwise. I heard what the Native Minister said with regard to withholding certain clauses until next session. I was very much pleased when he made that statement, because it was he who brought in the Bill, and therefore he had full power to push it on or put it off. By putting it off, the Native Minister would be carrying out the terms of the Speech from the Throne, published on the 19th August. That Speech stated that, if the Natives did not care to sell their land or to lease it, although Ministers saw and knew that some of the provisions of the present Acts were wrong, yet they would not propose bringing in any fresh legislation this session concerning those matters—they would put it off until next session. But the Government, instead of putting it off, have brought in this Bill at present before the House. There are provisions in this Bill which will injuriously affect the Natives; but, as the Native Minister has stated that he will defer the passing of those provisions, I am very glad. My honourable friend the Native member for the East Coast proposes that this matter should be postponed until Tuesday. I do not approve of that at all. If it is postponed until Tuesday, the Native Minister will withdraw the obnoxious provisions from his Bill, and the honourable member for the East Coast (Mr. Locke) will introduce the provisions of his Bill into this Act. I do not approve of that. This is all I have to say

Mr. HAKUENE.—Mr. Speaker, I desire to pay my respects to you, Sir, also to the Government, and to the honourable members of this House. I do this particularly on account of the privilege you have granted to a member

of my race to have the honour of appearing before this House, and the opportunity you have afforded him of bringing his grievances before this House. It is not as if he were speaking entirely for himself. He is speaking not only on behalf of himself, but on behalf of the whole of the Native tribes. Now, the House has heard what his ideas are, and the Govern-The Government have ment have replied. stated their intention with regard to the action they intend to take. I have no other word to say with regard to the Bill than what has already been stated. I think that Wahanui should not advise any other Bill to be brought in, or have any other measure but this, with regard to his lands. I think that the duty of legislating over the Native lands should be intrusted to the hands of the Government. I say this, because I know what the Native people are. It is this way: If I carry an axe and cut my foot, there is no one of my own people bound to give me relief. But if I am wounded by another person, I have a grievance against that person, and I can expect him to afford me such relief as is necessary. Now, I apply this to Wahanui and the proposed amendments he desired to make in the Bill now before the House. If he makes these amendments and makes a mistake, who is to remedy the evil? It will be different if the Government bring in a Bill to take away the Native lands and trouble is the result of that Bill. The Natives who have grievances will have their remedy. They will be in a position to come before this House, and represent their grievances. And no doubt the House would consider this: that, as this House passed that measure which has brought trouble on the Natives, so therefore this House would feel in duty bound to afford them the relief they asked for. My joy is very great for the relief which the Government have afforded me. I am referring to the dog-tax. Now, if that measure had been brought in by the Natives, we should have had no remedy; but, seeing that the Government brought that law into force, I should look to the Government for relief, and I think the Government will wipe away my tears. That is why I say that I have no fault to find with the Bill now before the House. I will not attempt to make any alterations in it. I will let it pass as it is, so that hereafter, if I see that any wrong has been done, my remedy will be clear. I will come here and express my grievance, in the hope of relief. I shall adhere to the words spoken by the Native Minister. I will bear those words in mind. I will devote the whole of my attention to the words of the Native Minister. I will not look at the Bill at all. I ask that the words spoken by the Native Minister may be published in the Maori lan-guage. All that remains for me to do is to express my gratification to this House for what has been done in this matter. I wish prosperity to the Qucen, to the Government, and to all the members of this House.

Mr. BRYCE.—I shall not have occasion to make the remarks just now that I had intended to make, because I have understood from the

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Native Minister that he practically intends to withdraw this Bill—that is to say, all except the clauses prohibiting private dealings with the land. I think that the last speaker has recognized to a considerable extent the very great difficulty in framing satisfactory legisla-tion on this subject. I myself regard it as altogether impossible to frame a measure for this House which would be free from objections, and therefore it is not surprising that the Bill before us may have objections to my mind and to the minds of others. However, the necessity for discussing the Bill has to a very large extent, or almost completely, passed away, inasmuch as the Native Minister intends to do what I have said. Sir, I think that there is some reason for disappointment that the Native Minister has apparently not attached more importance to the necessity of making some arrangements with the Maoris in regard to the land near the proposed trunk railway. It has been regarded by the House, and, I think, by his honourable colleague, in the Public Works Statement, as a matter of considerable importance that some such arrangement should be made. The Native Minister does not appear to consider that a matter of such paramount importance as probably it will be felt to be by members of this House. Now, in respect to that, I may say that I should certainly not propose for the future, in respect to railway construction, to treat the Maoris and their lands in any different manner from that in which Europeans would be treated. But, nevertheless, it is not an unreasonable thing that, if land belonging either to the Maoris or to Europeans is to have its value so largely enhanced by public works executed at the general expense of the colony, that land should contribute something special towards the cost of those works; and I do hope that the Hon. the Native Minister will endeavour to make some arrangement with the Maoris of that nature. I have to express my cordial thanks to the honourable member who introduced the Bill for the handsome manner in which he acknowledged what had been done by the late Government. What he said was this: He considered that the intentions of the late Government were always good, and that they had been attended, to some considerable extent, with good results. Now, I say that I consider that as a handsome acknowledgment, and, for myself, I desire no higher praise. The presence of the Native chief Wahanui here to-day was, I may say, an illustration of our improved relations with the Maoris, and it was a matter of very great gratification to me to see that Native chief at the bar of the House. Moreover, I agree with the Native Minister that every word Wahanui uttered might be taken as an expression of friendly intentions towards us. This Bill, as I have said, it is not necessary now to discuss; but I should like to observe that I consider the provisions of the Bill are very difficult to understand, and that, notwithstanding the explanation of the Native Minister, I think there is an unwonted degree of obscurity in the manner in which the intentions of the Bill

are expressed; and I believe I could have shown most conclusively that that obscurity in the terms was an undoubted indication of obscurity of thought. I believe that the person who drafted it had not a clear conception of certain fundamental principles that ought to be kept in view. Moreover, there are, in this Bill, powers taken by the Government, or proposed to be taken by the Government, of so astounding a character that the best thing that could be hoped for, in the interest of the country, is that the Maoris would not come under it, which I believe would be the case. I am not going into the details of the Bill; I merely express that opinion, which I think I could have shown reasons for; but it is not necessary now, because I am thoroughly convinced that the Bill to be introduced next session will be more carefully considered and very greatly altered. One thing we must acknowledge, that it is desirable to utilize the land of the Maoris: I do not say utilize it by sale, or even by lease; but it is necessary, in the interests of the colony, that these large areas of land should be utilized in some way. If they are not, the interests of the colony will suffer; the Maoris themselves will suffer; and you may take this as an undoubted fact: that, unless provision is made for utilizing them in some fair and reasonable way, they will be got at in some un-fair and unreasonable way. You will be utterly unable to prevent that, unless you deal with the question very shortly. My own opinions on this matter are well known, and I need not express them again. I have always felt that there ought to be some more open way of dealing with Native lands; and latterly I have felt more strongly than ever that the system which has for years past prevailed here of allowing private individuals to make private bargains with Maori owners has not only been open to grave objection, but it does not answer the ends which a public man ought to have in view. No good results, one may say, are produced, and the system is open to very grave scandal. The Hon. the Native Minister has alluded to the case of the 89,000 acres of a so-called reserve. That is a good enough illustration, I think, of his meaning and mine; for I think we are both of the same opinion in this matter. But there are many other stronger cases than that, and the price in that case has been a much nearer approximation to the value of the land than it has been in many cases that could be cited; and I do say that some more public manner of dealing with Maori lands ought in all cases to be provided. In the case in question I need not point out that the Government had really no power of interference. I will only say a word or two with regard to the question of Native Land Boards. In framing a Bill of this kind one thing, at any rate, should be kept distinctly in view-the essential difference between Maori land before the title has been investigated and after it has been so investigated. I would not on any account. whatever allow dealings with Natives previous. to the investigation of title. As to the manner in which titles are being investigated, I say it is

impossible, in my opinion, to go on recognizing community of title—the recognizing of community of title as distinct from the separation of title by individual titles. I say the recognition of community of title would simply bar the utilization and settlement of the land. to the manner in which the titles should be ascertained, I do also agree with the Native Minister that the Maori Committees which are in existence, or which may be in existence, ought to be utilized in that respect; but I do not hold that these Committees, of themselves, could ascertain and individualize the titles to the land. The latter portion of the inquiry—the individualizing of the land—would be altogether beyond their powers, and it is now beyond their conception. They know nothing of any such ideas. Their title has always been community of title, and they are not educated in any other idea. Yet, nevertheless, I think we must face the necessity of individualizing the titles as well as we can. been pointed out, it is impossible to do that to the perfect satisfaction of all the claimants. In the nature of things, I think it is impossible. I remember once, when I was a mere youth, travelling through a part of New Zealand with a Native—not a very great chief—and I asked him, in going over a part of the country, whose land that was, and he said, "It is my land." "What!" I said, "is it all your land?" And he said, "It is all my land." Well, I thought at the time that that man was simply "drawing a long bow;" but I am satisfied now that, from his point of view, he was declaring the simple truth, and every member of the tribe They have could have said the same thing. doubts as to the Court determining that certain pieces of land should be separated from the land of the tribe and given away to particular individuals, to the exclusion of any other No doubt that individual may scarcely be able to understand it. That is one reason why there are so many applications for rehearing; and satisfaction cannot be given, and cannot be expected to be given. But I would caution honourable members against sympathizing to too large an extent with these applications for rehearing. The investigation of title is a very expensive affair for the Maoris. I do not allude to the fees of the Court altogether-they are a mere bagatelle, in comparison—but I mean the incidental expenses they are put to, in attendance upon the Court, and so on. In some cases a very considerable proportion of the cost of the land is really taken or dissipated in these incidental expenses of ascertaining title. Now, if you afford too much facility for rehearing, and third hearing, and so on, it would intensify that evil which, as I have explained, exists in the expenses of investigation; and yet it is a thing to be expected that these applications for rehearing, and third hearing, will continue to be made. Well, I was just going to say that I think these Maori Committees ought to be utilized as assistants to the Court. To some extent, that is what is done by the Court now. The owners of the land attend the Court and give evidence; but,

before giving that evidence, they ought to meet together and try and arrange amongst themselves as fairly as they can what they should recommend the Court to do. In many cases the Court simply adopts the recommendations of these Committees, and, if they appear reasonable, they meet with the approval of the owners generally. Now, if a regularly constituted Committee could do that in a more formal manner it would be, I believe, a very great assistance to the Court. I may say that it is entirely hopeless to expect that any Maori Committee could progress in the settlement of title if left to themselves; the Maori expression Taihoa—Wait a while—would always come in, and the settlement of title would be indefinitely delayed. Moreover, there is this to be remembered: that, great as is the jealousy of the Natives in respect to the Land Court and in respect of Europeans, it must not be imagined that their jealousy in this respect is any less in regard to their own people. In many cases, indeed, their jealousy of one another is much more intense than their jealousy in regard to Europeans. There is just one point in this Bill to which I wish to direct the attention of the Government, not altogether with the view of getting them to alter it, but to consider it. The Government, of course, are going to obtain the power of purchasing Native lands. Under the proposals which have been made in former years, and which the Native Minister has referred to, it was proposed to create a Board to which the Maoris could apply to have their lands put up for disposal, in the same manner that the Crown lands are put up. Applications might well have been made to that Board, which would be distinct and separate from the Government; but, if applications are made to the Government themselves for the investigation of titles, or, rather, for the disposal of land -- if applications are made to the Government themselves for the disposal of the land—the Natives will, and properly so too, connect the Government with the work of the Board. Now, if the Government are at the same time purchasing land from the Natives, I think it would be well to sepsrate it from direct management of the Maori land which is proposed to be placed in the hands of the Government for sale through the Board. I submit that for the consideration of the Government. For the purpose of avoiding dissatisfaction amongst the Maoris, it would be well to allow the applications to be made direct to the Board, instead of their coming to the Government. I have nothing more to say, because, as I have already stated, the Bill has been practically withdrawn. I hope that the prohibition clauses, which are intended to prevent private speculators from entering into negotiations for the purchase of land in the meantime, will be carefully considered, because I assure honourable members that any Act which is intended to take in or keep out these people will have to be very closely considered, and the clauses for the purpose will have to be pretty carefully drawn.

Dr. NEWMAN.—I think the Native Minister

is to be congratulated on having brought in this Bill: but I agree with the honourable member for Waitotara that it is very advisable to withdraw the clauses which are to be withdrawn, so that during the recess the whole matter may he discussed by those interested. It is a very good thing indeed that the land through which the North Island Railway is to pass is to be brought under the operation of some such Act as this, so that speculators shall not be allowed to operate in it; for we know very well that there were, only within the last few weeks, people negotiating to get blocks of land along the route of this railway. But I should like the Native Minister to include a larger area in the schedule to this Bill, because I notice that there is some land within four miles of the milway not included, and, as he in some cases goes as far as twenty-five miles away from the line, I think he might include the particular piece which I have referred to as well. He told us that he had followed the course of the rivers, and no doubt he was quite right in that; but I notice that there are several blocks of land of a very fertile character a short distance from the boundary which might very well be included. This House has, I think, for some time past, been in the habit of paying great attention to and regarding as of great importance expressions of opinion by leading Natives-like Wahanui, for instance, who unquestionably is a great chief; but I sometimes doubt whether it is wise to pay too much attention to them. I believe that they occupy somewhat the same positions as the Duke of Sutherland and the Duke of Argyll in Scotland, and that the common people have their rights as well as these great men, and very eften have interests which are not considered by the chiefs. We are, I think, by paying too much attention to the chiefs, apt to overlook the rights of the majority; and I therefore hope that the Native Minister, when he goes into the question of Native land laws, will endeavour to pay some attention to the rights and wishes of the pariahs as well as to those of the great chiefs. I am glad that the Native Minister intends to look into the working of the Native Land Court. I think if he will go through the North Island he will find rumours, and rumours apparently well authenticated, of very unpleasant transactions in connection with the Native Land Court. There are a great number of Judges employed, and I venture to say this: that things go on in connection with this Court which would not be tolerated were they done in the large towns of the colony, where they would come under public notice. The whole system wants re-modelling, and I hope the Minister will take the matter in hand.

Mr. LOCKE. — I wish to say a few words upon this question. As the Native Minister is going to take the machinery clauses out of this Bill I need say nothing upon that matter, but I hope that, if he is going to introduce a Bill dealing with this subject next session, we shall during the recess learn what his proposals will be, and have an opportunity of dis-

cussing them. However, these clauses have gone: the few words which the Native Minister said. at the end of his speech took all the "sting out of the tail," as Wahanui said. With reference to Wahanui, I would remark that I do not think the House really understood what Wahanui meant with reference to the animal he described as having a sting in its tail and a monster head with large teeth. I believe he referred to the private speculators and agents of monopolizing companies, who bother the Natives for their land; the monster head meaning the Government with Bills with teeth or clauses. The Native Minister touched on a subject in which I take a great interest, and in connection with which I introduced a Biff in the early part of the session: I mean subdivisions. It would, perhaps, have been a bad thing for the Native Minister and the ex-Native Minister if they had dealt in land on the East Coast; but I am not sure that it would not have been a good thing for the colony. They would have appreciated the difficulty of the question better, and would have sympathized more with the object I had in view in introducing that Bill. There is a European side as well as a Maori side to this question. For years and years Natives and Europeans have been suffering in a most grievous way through their not having power to subdivide lands. Europeans bought a certain number of shares in a block, but they could not get those shares cut out. It is not possible to get individualization; a man cannot say that any particular piece is his; and therefore no improvements are made. What is required is that a European who has purchased shares in a block of land, or leased from a certain number, should be allowed to apply for a subdivision direct. It is estimated there are over a million acres of land in that part of the country in that position, as a result of the Act of 1873 and the subsequent amendments to that Act. Europeans cannot get titles to either their leases or their purchases, and the Natives are in an equally bad position. If the Bill which I introduced had been passed we should have had a settlement of these matters. Europeans would have got their shares of the land and improved it; and a large portion of the land would have gone back to the Natives, to be profitably occupied by themselves, or to be leased to Europeans, who would have made improvements. There would certainly have been a large expenditure there within the next few years that would have been of great advantage to the colony. If only an average of 10s. per acre were to be spent there in the improvement of the million acres I spoke of during the next few years, that would mean an expenditure of about half a million of money; and the land in the district, instead of carry ing four or five hundred thousand sheep, would then carry over two millions, and the valleys and agricultural portions would be settled by an industrious population. But this stagnation is still to continue as it has existed year after year, without remedy. My object in bringing the measure down was to put an end to this. I hope the Native Minister will really take the matter into consideration during the recess, with the object of dealing with it next session.

Mr. HOBBS.—In saying a few words upon this Bill, I would take the opportunity of congratulating the House upon the spirit in which this question has been discussed. Time was when we could not have a discussion on Native affairs without party politics entering into it. Immediately when measures connected with the interests of the Native race were brought down, influence was brought to bear upon the Native members to induce them to oppose what was proposed, and the Government measures were consequently thwarted, and not allowed to pass. I am glad to think that we are now getting into a better way. I was pleased with the speech of the Native Minister. Taken as a whole, it was very satisfactory; and I hope that his speech will be printed in the Maori Gazette and disseminated as widely as possible. It would be well, indeed, to have the whole discussion circulated among the Maoris; and I hope the report of the discussion will be translated into Maori from Hansard. I was glad to hear the firm manner in which the Native Minister expressed himself upon some questions; but I trust it will not end in mere talk, but that he will, like his predecessor, show that good trait in the administration of Native affairs—determination to carry out the law. There are one or two points that I wish to speak upon, because they have been alluded to. The first is, trafficking in Native lands by private indivi-duals. I am not one of those who believe that the Government should be the sole purchaser of Native land. The time has gone by for that, and those who talk in favour of that simply speak in ignorance, or advocate what they know cannot be carried out. I think that the Natives have just as much right to sell their land to the highest bidder as any member of this House has, and I hope the House is not prepared to coerce the Natives in that respect. I make these remarks because there is an uncomfortable feeling that the Government take an opportunity of proclaiming blocks of land and making small advances upon them, with the object of securing the land at a very small price—at any rate, for much less than what private individuals would give the Natives. That is most unfair, and is a cause of irritation amongst the Maoris; and the Government should set their faces against it. I also wish to remind the Government, although I do not suppose they need reminding of it, of the necessity of the Government carrying out the law in reference to Europeans making advances on land prior to its passing through the Court. It must be well known to the Government now, and to any persons who have a knowledge of Native affairs, that there are parties even now negotiating for land in the King country, though the law strictly prohibits such a thing, and provides the heavy penalty of £500 for it. we passed the Act it was proposed that the punishment should be imprisonment; but that was not carried. The heavy penalty of £500

was provided; but, in spite of that, parties are now negotiating and making advances to the Natives. The Government have their agents in the various Native districts, and must be aware of what is going on, and I do hope that some steps will be taken to put a stop to this. Of course these parties are just waiting an opportunity. They are in hope that at some future time there may be in office an unscrupulous Government, so that they may get the restrictions removed, and get the land. These people cry out about the land being locked up. I do not wish to see the land locked up. I wish to see the Natives able to dispose of it to the highest bidder, care of course being taken toreserve enough to secure that the Natives shall not be paupers. We want the country settled; but I object to the cry being made, when the Native Minister either proclaims a block or determines not to permit dealings in land, that the land is being locked up and not allowed to be settled. That is a good cry; it goes down well; but I hope the Government will not be led away by it. I do not propose to traverse the Bill, because to do so is now quite unnecessary. I have read it through two or three times, and I must say that I am not pleased with it; so that I am glad to hear that the Native Minister intends to withdraw it, and will only bring down clauses which will prevent persons dealing with this land. I think that will be sufficient in the meantime, and it is in accordance with the promise given by the Government in the early part of the session, that they would not deal with Native lands generally this session. Native lands have always been the great difficulty in dealing with the Natives, and, while people want to buy land and there is Native land to be got hold of, depend upon it that there will be difficulties with the Natives. Therefore it will be for us to support the Government in carrying out any law which will give equal justice to both Europeans and Na-tives. I believe that it is the intention of the Government to do that; and I may say, for myself, that, in the large district which I have the honour to represent, and in which so many Natives live, it will be my endeavour to assist

the Government in every way that I can.

Mr. GRIGG.—I must express my gratification at seeing that noble chief, Wahanui, standing at the bar of the House, and imploring usto put in force laws which will prevent that dreadful liquor traffic which is destroying the souls and bodies of our fellow-creatures. I hope the Government will carry out those laws in the strictest possible manner; and, if they are not sufficiently stringent at present, that they will make them so, so that this disgrace upon our race may not rest upon it. We have had these laws in existence for years, but the Government have taken no steps to enforce them; but I hope the present Government will endeavour to carry out the wishes of the Natives in this respect.

Sir G. GREY.—I should like to make a few remarks on this measure. First, I should say that one point which has not been touched upon in the discussion on this Bill is the wel-

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fare of the entire population of the country. Τı feel a kind of anxiety at present, because the Native Minister has brought down a measure many of the provisions of which I confess I do not approve of, and which, I agree with the honourable member for Waitotara, contains so many provisions that are obscure and peculiar that I think they must have struck with astonishment those who are acquainted with the Native question. But when I came down prepared to discuss this measure, having bestowed great care upon it, I find something which I was very glad to hear—that the measure is to be withdrawn. But the House will see that we shall have to consider very carefully the measure which is to take its place. I have no idea what clauses the honourable gentleman proposes to insert in place of those which he intends to strike out. That will be a most important point, because we know that, during this session, considerable discussion has gone on outside the House with regard to this measure. That discussion has not taken place in the country, because there has not been time to circulate the Bill; but I do not think that there has ever been so much pressure brought to bear with regard to any measure affecting the Native race as there has been with regard to this, in order to induce honourable members to support either one side or the other. I am not aware what clauses are intended to be inserted in the Bill, and we must consider the interests of the entire population; because, if we make great concessions to the Natives, and at the same time hand over to them the control of their lands, we have, on the other hand, to see that they exercise that power to the interest of both races. For instance, if it were intended that the Natives should have the power—as I have heard some speakers say—to do exactly as they like with their own lands, and dispose of them in the best market — using general terms of that kind - I can conceive no greater misfortune that could happen to this country than that the disposing of Native lands should be transferred from New Zealand to Great Britain. I think the European inhabitants of this country, having for many years remained in the country, many of them deprived of the opportunity of getting any lands—having sacri-ficed the Crown's right of pre-emption—and having been all those years adding to the value of the whole country, of which I am very glad—have a right to expect that the land will be sold nowhere but in the Colony of New Zea-land. It is my belief that the land should first be offered for sale here, and that persons should be required to come to these shores to make their purchases. I say that because I saw, some twelve or fifteen months ago, a proposal that a great society in London—a quasi-religious society—was to dispose of these lands in Great Britain, and take them away from the ken and knowledge of the people of New Zealand. I think that you could cause no greater wrong to the Europeans and Natives and halfcastes in this country than that they should be unable to get land here. I shall, therefore,

move, in Committee, that the Bill be published in its new form, with all the clauses in it that are to be introduced. I think we are entitled to that, because I apprehend that some agreement has been come to between the Natives and the Native Minister. I do not know that as a positive fact, but I was told, just before this business was introduced to the House, that there was some such agreement, and I think we should know the nature of it; and therefore I do not think we should be asked to go into Committee on this Bill until 'Tuesday, by which time we shall be able to consider the great interests in this country which are dependent upon this question. We know that there are now many gentlemen who are pur-chasing Native lands, and whose rights are inchoate, and they have been taking steps to have their views introduced into the Bill; and we know that there are others besides who are doing the same thing. I think the Government should pass an Act that no more sales should go on from Natives to Europeans. Put a stop to that at once, and then let the Government pass any Act they think necessary to give them full security over the land through which the proposed line of railway is to be taken, and also over any other land through which it will be necessary to take any other railways in this Island. Then, in addition to that, pass an Act which will give the Government power to take land, upon giving fair compensation to the Natives. I think that two or three clauses will fulfil all that is required, and I am certain the time has arrived when we must consider the interests of the inhabitants of the whole of New Zealand, and when this House must not be upset by the pressure of persons who entertain peculiar views of their own. What we require is to legislate for the whole of New Zealand, and I ask, as a first instalment in that direction, that, as this Bill is to be withdrawn, we shall have the Bill in its amended form laid before us, so that we can see the effect of the amendments before we are asked to go further with it.

Mr. BALLANCE. - Sir, I have only a few words to say in reply to the speeches made on this Bill. First of all, in reference to what the honourable member for Auckland East has said, I desire to state that there is no agreement with any Natives with regard to any provisions to be inserted in this Bill, except that I promised to have some clauses printed which some of the Native members expressed a wish to move as amendments in Committee. With regard to the honourable gentleman's statement that he has no idea of the clauses to be inserted, I may say that the clauses we propose to insert are of the simplest possible character. One is contained in the Bill itself, and provides that all the land referred to in the schedule shall come under the provisions of the Bill itself. The other clause is one absolutely prohibiting any dealing with the Natives for the land within the boundaries here men-

tioned except by the Government.
Sir G. GREY.—Do these clauses constitute
the whole Bill?

Mr. BALLANCE.—I cannot say whether there may not be more than two or three clauses; but there will be no more brought down than will carry out the object I have named — that is, the prohibition of dealings with the lands within the declared boundaries. Now, with regard to what the honourable gentleman and the honourable member for Waitotara have said as to the Bill itself being obscure, I should just like to say that that has has been the case in regard to all legislation in the past, on this subject, which has been enacted in the colony. I do not know whether Bills brought down previously have been described as obscure, in the first instance; but I do know that, after they have been in operation for a short time, they have been found to be not only obscure but unworkable, and not calculated to carry out the purpose for which they were intended. The result has been that in a very short time fresh legislation has been brought down to amend those measures, and to change the machinery. Take, for example, the West Coast Settlement Act of 1881. I believe the honourable member for Auckland East accepted that measure, and that the amendments which were suggested and inserted in the Bill met with his approval. Well, in 1883 it was found that that measure was in many respects unworkable, and fresh amendments had consequently to be made. And now, in 1884, one year afterwards, the measure of 1883 is found not to carry out the purposes for which it was intended, and another Bill has to be brought down repealing the whole Act of 1883 and substituting other provisions. So that, I say, if there is obscurity in this Bill—and I am not going to argue that point now, especially since the machinery clauses are to be dropped out — it is only parallel with all other Native land legislation for many years. I have to tender my thanks to the honourable member for the Bay of Islands (Mr. Hobbs) for the kind remarks he has made regarding the assistance he is pre-pared to give the Native administration in dealing with Native lands in his own district. I am quite sure the honourable gentleman means what he says, and that I shall always learn from him the result of his experience, and receive his assistance. In regard to enforcing punitive clauses in Native land legislation, so as to prevent private individuals from breaking the law in dealing with lands, I say that, of course, it is the duty of the Government to enforce those provisions to prevent, if possible, illegal dealings with Native lands. But I have never had sufficient proof brought before me that those illegal dealings are carried on. I have no doubt that they have been carried on, and I believe that, if the Government are aware of them, it is their duty, as far as possible, to prevent them. I quite agree with a great deal that the honourable member for Auckland East said with regard to what the object of land legislation ought to be. I thoroughly agree with him that the object of our Native land legislation ought to be, speaking broadly, the benefit of all classes in New Zealand, and

not the benefit of a few. All this persistent advocacy on the part of individuals who have private interests to serve is a thing which should be withstood. But I suppose that, until the end of the chapter, we shall have among us people who will consult their private interests alone, and who will try by every means in their power to have those interests promoted. I am sorry that we cannot prevent it, and it seems to me almost impossible to do so. In reference to what the honourable member for the Eastern Maori District said, we shall be quite prepared on Tuesday to consider any clauses that he may put on the Order Paper. On Tuesday he will have an opportunity of submitting his views to the House in Committee. There is no occasion to hold over the second reading to-day. I object, of course, to the introduction of fresh matter. we have arrived at an understanding, I object to anything else being introduced except prohibitive clauses to prevent transactions in this land. I have to thank honourable members who have expressed their views on this measure for the manner in which they have spoken, and generally for the assistance they have offered. I feel certain we shall have advanced a very important step if we prohibit all dealings in Native lands.

Mr. BRYCE.—The honourable gentleman made one remark which I did not quite understand. He said that clause 7 would be retained, and that the land contained in the schedule was to remain subject to the provisions of this Bill. But the provisions of this Bill, as I understand it, are to be struck out.

Mr. BALLANCE.—What I meant was this: that only the prohibitive clauses, preventing dealings, should be retained in the Bill. But the 6th clause brings the land in the schedule under this Bill; and clause 7 prevents dealings in Native lands otherwise than in accordance with this Bill. Those are the prohibitive clauses of the Bill. Of course, as the machinery clauses are to be struck out, these clauses will have to be remodelled. We shall have to refer to the schedule, and the new clauses will be practically the same except in reference to machinery.

Sir G. GREY.—I wish to make a personal explanation, and to say that I think my acquiescence in the West Coast Settlement Bill has been pushed rather farther than I ever gave it. I certainly acquiesced in the principle of the measure, and in the propriety of such a measure; but with all its details I was by no means in accord. Further, I wish to say that I have been misunderstood. I did not object to the obscurity of this Bill, because I think that nothing could be plainer than the provisions to which I objected. I objected to what I believe to be unjust provisions.

Bill read a second time.

TIMBER-FLOATING BILL.
Mr. TOLE moved, That this Bill be read a third time.

Mr. MOAT said that all parties seemed to agree that some such Bill was absolutely necessary, and its provisions seemed to have met with the acquiescence of those who represented the timber trade as well as of those who represented the settlers. All that he wished to say now was that, seeing that this was in a certain way experimental legislation, the Government, if they found its provisions dealt hardly with the settlers, or that under its provisions injuries were inflicted upon them for which no proper compensation was provided, should undertake either to amend or repeal it in a future session. Bill read a third time.

#### NEW ZEALAND LOAN BILL.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I beg to move the second reading of this Bill. It is framed on the plan of all the Loan Bills which have come before us. The schedule does not set out the separate railway works, but it states the amounts for the various purposes in accordance with the proposals of the Public Works Statement, and in accordance with the decisions of Parliament in former sessions. As all the new works are set forth in the Public Works Statement, it will not be necessary for me to go through them again, and I will simply move the second reading.

Major ATKINSON .- I have very little to say upon this Bill, for the House has accepted the proposals of the honourable gentleman. I may have, presently, when we get into Committee, some remarks to make upon the schedule—as to whether it may be advisable to make some slight alterations; but no doubt the time for further opposition has passed, as far as I can judge from the decision of the House last night and the general tone of the debate, as to the advisability of borrowing a million and a half instead of a million. I therefore do not intend to oppose the second reading of the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

#### PROPERTY-TAX BILL.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I beg to move the second reading of this Bill. As honourable members are aware, it is an Act which has to be renewed every year. On the present occasion we are reducing the duty by one-half.

Major ATKINSON.-It would have afforded me, under ordinary circumstances, very great pleasure to support such a Bill as this—that is to say, to reduce the property-tax to as low a point as would be fair to other tax-paying classes of the community. But I must enter my protest again, as strongly as it is possible to do so, against this apparent remission of the tax merely in the interest of a class, and not after due consideration of the burdens of the country generally. That is the ground upon which I object to it. The honourable gentleman has never as much as referred to, as far as I know, this important question of the incidence of our taxes, and whether they are bearing fairly upon all classes. I do not believe they are. I say distinctly that, in my opinion, we are relieving a certain class now at the expense of other classes. Whether the pro-

pertied class should pay directly, in one way or another, is not the question now. We have endeavoured to equalize taxation; and now the honourable gentleman, without considering that question at all, has determined to remit this taxation upon the propertied class. which is taxation imposed upon them with the view of equalizing taxation on the various classes in the colony. I am not going to take up the time of the House, because the House has apparently made up its mind to de this, and to borrow in aid of this particular class. That being so, I merely enter my protest against it, because I am certain we have

not heard the last of this question.

Mr. MONTGOMERY. - I am not going to follow the direction of the honourable gentleman's thoughts, or what he said; but I am sorry I cannot support the Bill, for a few reasons I will adduce. We are now about to reduce taxation, when, by the Budget, we have a deficiency of £58,000 on the revenue; and we are going to do this at a time when we are about to consolidate our stocks upon the London market, and we cannot do this unless we borrow money to enable us to do it. Therefore, Sir, I think it is unwise for us to reduce the tax at the present time. I think it is wrong, also, to make a reduction in taxation when we can only meet our liabilities and responsibilities by borrowing money to do it; and it is solely for that reason I oppose the Bill. I do not at the present moment enter into the question of the incidence of taxation. That is a large question, and no doubt, when the Government come before us next session, in bringing forward the local-government measures the taxation of the country will be generally dealt with. But I do put it to the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer to consider, is he doing a wise thing, in the interests of the country, to let it go forth to the world—and I would object altogether to anything affecting our finances not going forth to the world—is he doing a wise thing in creating the fact which must go forth to the world, that we cannot meet the liabilities which we have engaged to fulfil without borrowing money to do it, and yet that at the same time we are going to reduce taxation? The honourable gentleman knows very well that, when we obtained the Consolidated Loan of 1867, we gave full particulars of our resources and our liabilities up to that time; that we made it patent to those people who invested in our bonds, and to the world, that we were bound, out of the consolidated revenue of the country, to provide, for the liability attaching to that and other loans we were borrowing, a Sinking Fund. And on the Consolidation of Stock Bill, before going into Committee, I intend to say a few words. I hope the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer will believe I shall not do so out of any hostile feeling towards him or towards the Government; but I have a duty to the country and to the people I represent. I will only say that I cannot support this Bill, because you cannot remit taxation without borrowing money to enable you to do it, and I therefore hold that the thing is unsound in principle and will be pernicious in 328

practice, and will affect our loans very largely to our prejudice in the money-market.

Sir G. GREY.—Sir, I wish to say that I must give my vote against this measure. I think it is imposing an unfair taxation on the country. If the honourable gentleman had intended to take off any taxation, he should have reduced the duties upon the necessaries of life, which every one is obliged to con-sume; and, secondly, if we are compelled to borrow on the one hand, I really cannot see on what principle he can take off taxation from property. Had he proposed to reduce the Customs duties it might have been said that there would be a larger consumption, so that it might not be a loss to the revenue, and some might have gone so far as to say it would increase the revenue; but here no plea of that kind can be set up. I do not think that taking off this property-tax will increase anything, and I think it is taking taxation off the wrong class of people. I also agree with the honourable member for Akaroa that it is unsound in principle to reduce the taxation in this particular kind of way at the very moment when you are raising fresh sums of money. I shall therefore record my vote against the

Mr. SHRIMSKI.-I take an entirely different view on this question from that of the honourable member for Egmont. The honourable gentleman says that there is no need for the reduction of this tax. If he goes a little farther south from this I think he will find very great depression that this special taxation has created. The honourable member wishes us to believe that this is taking taxation off the moneyed classes, and is not done in the interests of the lower classes or the working classes. I can tell the honourable gentleman that in consequence of this taxation the country is now suffering from depression, and hundreds are out of employment and cannot find anything for themselves or their families. This taxation prevents people from investing their money and making improvements on their properties.

Mr. HOBBS.—No.

Mr. SHRIMSKI.—The great authority from the Bay of Islands says "No." I should like to look at the property-tax returns from the Bay of Islands. You will not find a great amount of revenue coming from that part of the colony. I think the honourable gentleman had better keep quite clear of me. honourable gentleman, the member for Auck-land East, says he will vote against the Bill. I have great admiration for that honourable gentleman's ability, and have always tried to follow in his footsteps with reference to this taxation; but that honourable gentleman has always advocated the abolition of it, and I cannot see his consistency in opposing its reduc-tion. We must first begin in a small way, and, having done away with the property-tax, then we can get the land-tax. No one can deny hat the property-tax has been a great draw-back to industrial pursuits and to the industrial classes.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD.—Unless I am mistaken, those honourable gentlemen who vote against the Bill because the property-tax is proposed to be reduced would exactly defeat their object if they were successful in throwing the Bill out, because it seems to me no other Property-Tax Bill could be brought down this session, and really there would then be no property-tax at all.

Major ATKINSON.—A Bill could be brought

down by a message from the Governor.

Mr. W. F. BUCKLAND.—I merely wish to say a few words. I intend to vote against the Bill. I am one of those who ought to vote for the Bill; but I intend to vote against it, because I think we should be men enough to pay our fair share of the taxation of the colony. I also think that the property-tax has not been the cause of depression in the colony. If half of this property-tax, which does not amount to more than £100,000, is going to cast depression on the colony and throw thousands of men out of employment, I say it is a very extraordinary thing, and the colony must be in a state in which it does not require much to cause depression. I certainly intend to oppose the Bill.

Mr. BUCHANAN.—I do not intend to say very much upon this subject. I merely wish to say that a great deal of the taxation which it is necessary to impose upon the country is for expenditure which has benefited property. I have always contended that this is so, and that, on that account, such a tax as this should be paid by the owners of property. It has been said that the loans that have been raised and spent in the colony have benefited the work-ing-classes. There can be no doubt that has been the case; but the benefit to them has been to a large extent of a temporary character. As soon as wages have risen beyond the normal level, an influx of labour has taken place from the other colonies and from England-I mean apart altogether from the labour that has been imported and paid for by the colony. The permanent benefit has remained with the owners of property, both in town and country; and, on that account - although I am not at all contending that the property-tax is a perfect system of taxation—I have always held that owners of property in this colony should, to a certain extent, bear direct taxation such as is imposed by the property-tax. On this ground, and holding that any remission of taxation, if at all possible, should not be made in this way,

I shall vote against the Bill.
Mr. ROLLESTON.—Sir, I shall vote against the Bill, whatever may be the result. I think those who are opposing the system of finance as not at all equal to the exigencies of the country at the present time are bound to record their opinions in that direction. We have performed this session one of the most marvellous financial feats. We began with a deficiency of £150,000, we propose to take something like £150,000 of taxation off the wealthy classes, and we are told that at the end of the year we shall have a surplus of £50,000, which is to be obtained by a process of finessing with the

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accumulated Sinking Fund that very few members of this House understand, which I am sure the country does not understand, and which I think will be most dangerous to our finances. This is not the time to go into a general financial discussion, and I certainly think, if I were capable of doing it, I should not do it at the present time. But I do think we are in a very dangerous position; and, if anything were wanting to show the dangerous position of the colony, I think it would be found in the little bit of finance that is added—no doubt by the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer-to the Public Works Statement, where we find that we are really dependent for the future upon our borrowing upon the savings, and not really upon anything that we could certainly count upon. I said that we began this year with a deficiency in the revenue of £150,000, and we are told by the Minister for Public Works that he is making his calculations for the future upon the basis that we shall have a natural increase of revenue of £50,000 a year, an addition to the year's savings on account of conversion of £20,000, and an increase of £25,000 on account of new works: in all, £95,000. I think the whole position is eminently unsatisfactory at the present time, and, feeling that very strongly, I shall record my opinion on every occasion against the financial proposals of the Government.

Dr. NEWMAN.--While I agree with the general principle that the Sinking Fund should be done away with, I do regret that the proposed remission of taxation should not benefit in any degree the working-classes of this colony, because there can be no doubt that the reduction of three-eighths of a penny will have no influence whatever in that direction. I object to the Bill on this ground also: that it makes a present of the three-eighths to the wealthier classes, and does nothing for the very large class indeed who do not own £500; and, at a time like this, when there is so much depression throughout the colony, I think it would have been very much better to have allowed the property-tax to remain as it is. If there is one thing more than another that has astonished me it is the different views which honourable members take on the subject of political economy; and an almost equal diversity of opinion prevails amongst honourable members as to the cause of the depression which at present exists. The honourable member for Akaroa tells us that it is due to a poor property-tax, which has never realized more than £280,000. I maintain that the real causes of the depression are the fall in the value of wool, the fall in the value of wheat, and the reckless extravagance on useless works. honourable member for Oamaru wants to know what caused the depression. For answer, I will refer him to the extravagant waste that is going on all over the colony. We have been spending enormous sums of money on useless waterworks, and on expensive harbour undertakings, and on railways which have been merely made for political purposes, and which bring in no revenue at all. Whether the ex-

penditure is sanctioned by local bodies or by this House, we shall find that a great and extravagant waste of money has been going on; and the depression that exists is due to the fall in the value of our commodities on the other side of the world, and to reckless extravagance. For these reasons, and thinking that the remission of three-eighths will do no good, I beg to enter my protest against the Bill. If any remission of taxation is to be made, I consider that the benefit should be given to all those people many thousands of whom, at different times, are out of work and very hardly pressed upon. Therefore I should have liked to see any remission go in the direction of

benefiting that large class to whom I refer.

Mr. GRIGG.—In order that my vote may not be misunderstood, I wish to say that it is too late now to raise the question. A large majority of this House has accepted the Financial Statement. I would wish to point out that the propertied classes have not requested this remission. I, for one, regret it very much. I have said from the very first that I thought it was not wise to remit this tax, and especially because I saw that, if that were done, the ultimate intention was to impose a class tax in place of it; and I would very much rather see the full amount of property-tax paid than see any class tax introduced. It is too late now to raise the question. We have accepted the Financial Statement. I would point out that, although we are providing means for present requirements by borrowing instead of continuing the full amount of this tax, yet we are only putting off the evil day. It is the property-holders that will have to pay for this extra borrowing. It will come upon us, no doubt; and, although I shall vote for the Bill before the House, I shall vote for it as a property-tax in some shape. I am perfectly conscious that I am only staving off the personal liability, which will come very soon. When the question before this House is a property-tax or a land-tax I shall have no hesitation whatever on which side to range myself.

Mr. STOUT.—I wish to say one or two words before the question is put. I must say that I am surprised at the course taken by some honourable gentlemen to-day. I understood that the honourable member for Akaroa was opposed to a property - tax; also that the honourable member for Auckland East was opposed to a property-tax. And yet they complain that the property-tax is reduced. I cannot see the consistency of such a position. The honourable member for Akaroa and the honourable member for Auckland East both agree that it is bad finance to go on paying Sinking Fund. They both agree to that principle.

Mr. MONTGOMERY.—It is good finance to

Mr. STOUT.—There is no distinction. What is conversion but a means of getting rid of your Sinking Fund? It is one means of doing it. There is nothing in a name. The two honourable gentlemen I refer to also say that the property-tax is bad; and yet they complain of the Government reducing it. I do not know that the honourable member for Thorndon, by his conduct in this House, has any right to speak on behalf of the working-classes, except it be—well, I will not say any more about it. And what is the peculiar political economy enunciated by the honourable member for Thorndon? This is it: that the property-tax does not affect the working-classes. This is something new in the way of political economy. Is it to be argued that it does not affect them, because they do not pay it directly? They do not pay the Customs duties directly. Who pay? The large importers. But who ultimately have to pay? The consumers. Well, what is the property-tax charged on? Is it not charged on goods?

An Hon. MEMBER. - How much? What

percentage?

Mr. STOUT.—"What percentage?" The question of percentage has nothing to do with it. The property-tax is charged on stocks—on everything the merchant possesses. Do you think the merchant is so generous as to pay that out of his own pocket? Will he not put the charge on to those who buy the goods from him? That he will.

Major ATKINSON.—No.

Mr. STOUT. - The honourable gentleman will never be a merchant, or, if he be a merchant, he will be an unsuccessful one. Does the merchant not put on to the charge for his goods every penny of taxation he has to pay -his rates, insurance, freight, and everything? Does the honourable gentleman know how merchants charge? Has he ever seen a merchant's books? Every penny is charged on the stocks. Who has to pay it? The consumer of the stocks. It is an unfair tax. Even though some articles like cotton goods are exempt, all pay under the property-tax. The workingclasses consume a large quantity of cotton, prints, &c., and these are all subject to taxation. This taxation makes no exception, and, if the merchant pays the tax in the first instance, the consumer has to pay it eventually. It is political economy of the most peculiar kind to say that the consumer has not to pay

An Hon. MEMBER.—What about the mort-

gagees?

Mr. STOUT. — I am glad the honourable gentleman reminds me of the mortgagees. What has happened with regard to them? What have they done because of this property-tax? Why, Sir, they have done this: Charged a half per cent. extra on the mortgages. The honourable gentleman says, I presume, that the mortgagor does not pay the tax. Why, Sir, what is the whole question? Money is just the same as sugar or anything else. When a man has sugar to sell, he enters it for sale in the market where he gets the best price for it. And if he lends money he does exactly the same thing—he goes to the market where he will get the best interest. And if he finds that there is charged on him a certain property-tax, he calculates whether he shall invest his money in this colony or not. I suppose there are

members of this House who are acting perhaps for large Home companies, and for individuals, in the lending of money; and I would ask them if it is not a fact that large sums of money have been stopped from coming to this colony for investment on account of the property-tax. Now, what does that mean? That means, the less money comes into the colony the larger is the interest charged. And who pays the interest? The mortgagor. It is all nonsense to assume that, if you put taxation on property, the people in the colony-the great body of the people - are not affected by that taxation. They are affected by that taxation in hundreds of ways. Why, Sir, what does taxation mean? Taxation means this: that Why, Sir, what does you take from capital a certain proportion of money to be spent for State purposes, which, if it were not taken away for State purposes, would be left to the capitalists for expenditure That is what will happen, in other ways. whatever form of taxation you use. I understood the honourable members for Akaroa, Auckland East, and Thorndon to support the property-tax not being reduced, because it is a class tax

Mr. MONTGOMERY.—At the present time. Mr. STOUT.—They say that at the present time it is a class tax; and then the honourable member for Wakanui says it is not a class tax, and that he supports it in order that a class tax may not be introduced. When honourable members are able to settle amongst themselves what a proper tax is, then I will argue with them. I know that the honourable member for Egmont is very sore about this propertytax. Having adopted it from some American State, having followed in the wake of the honourable member for Akaroa — because it was from that honourable gentleman he obtained the suggestion first in the House and having adopted the honourable member for Akaroa's suggestion, he thinks that, because it is his proposal, therefore it must be wise and good, and that there is no other taxation equal to this property tax. I believe the time has come—if not, it will come—when the people will see that the property-tax is not the best form of taxation, and that another form will have to be introduced. And I therefore say this: that the present Bill is purely a tentative We cannot deal with taxation in a broad and comprehensive way this session. It is bound up with several things that have to be dealt with — with the local-government question. All these matters have to do with this question of taxation. I am of opinion that the fewer taxes people have to pay the better. It is no gain whatever to pay taxes, and therefore, if it is no gain, I cannot see why there should be any objection to the reduction of this tax.

Mr. BARRON. — Whilst the Premier was speaking, I just put to myself privately a test question. I said, "Well, now, as a property-holder, which class of taxation would I like remitted? Should I more directly benefit by a reduction in the property-tax, or by some reduction, through the Customs, on the necessaries

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And, as I answered my own question to myself conscientiously, I came to the conchusion that I should feel the benefit of the remission of this property-tax much more certainly than I should the remission of any taxa-tion through the Customs. The property-tax is an inquisitorial and oppressive tax upon industry, upon enterprise, upon the frugal habits of the people. I do not believe in it; I think it should never have been imposed. Direct taxation has a salutary moral effect, and my own opinion is that a land-tax is the proper form of such taxation. But we have the property-tax, the remissions proposed would leave its objectionable features still remaining, and I maintain that this is not the time for us to remit direct taxation at all. I am very glad that the honourable member for Egmont, the leader of the Opposition, has not upon this occasion moved that this Bill be read the second time this day six months. It shows that he does not regard this as a party question, on which he can hope to secure a party victory, and that the House will be able to vote upon the question on its merits. I shall vote against the Bill. Had the desire of the Government been to free the country from that taxation which presses most heavily upon the people, I submit that their proposition should rather have been to remit the whole of the mgar duty, that being, perhaps, an article which is consumed by most people more than any other article that is taxed through the Customs; but, instead of proposing a remission of the sugar duty, they propose a remission of the property-tax, which, although it falls upon the people, falls much more directly on the property-owners throughout the colony. The Colonial Treasurer seems to have an idea that he is justified in borrowing money to pay taxes by doing away with the Sinking Fund; and, Sir, his style of finance reminds me very much of the style of finance of his predecessor. That was the same, with a dif-barence. His predecessor had an idea that he could create a favourable state of finance and square accounts by the issue of Treasury billsdeficiency bills, which ultimately became absorbed in the public debt. Making a surplus by postponing the payment of our debt seems to be a congenial operation to both, and I do not think that those who have the best interests of the colony at heart believe that it is an eperation that ought to be encouraged. I submit that this is no time to reduce taxation; I submit that the manipulation of finance which has resulted in showing us an apparent surplus by simply doing away with the Sinking Fund in only a manipulation in figures, and not in facts. I hope the Government will see their way to withdraw this measure, and, recognizing that the Sinking Fund belongs to loan, not to zevenue, bring down another to impose the proparty-tax at the same rate as it was last year. I hope, if they are still determined to reduce teration, they will see their way to free something which presses more heavily on the masses of the people throughout the colony.

Mr. MOSS.—I think the Premier has made

one mistake. He says we have got rid of the payment to the Sinking Fund by the universal consent of the House.

Mr. STOUT,—I did not say by the universal consent of the House. I have never yet seen a. Parliament whose opinion was universal on any subject

Mr. MOSS.—It was virtually by the universal consent of the House; there were very few dissentients. I understand the Premier to say that the Government feel at liberty to remit this tax—that, inasmuch as there is no money to be paid to Sinking Fund, the revenue has been relieved, and there is a surplus for disposal. That is altogether a fallacy. The law still compels the Government to pay into the Sinking Fund; they will have to do so, as they have always done. The only difference is that, instead of paying so much cash into the Sinking Fund, they intend to issue so many shortdated debentures and put them in. Now, I want to ask this: Suppose, from some cause or other, this inscription of stock does not succeed, where shall we be then? We shall simply have repealed this tax and added the amount. to the public debt of the colony. We shall have one hundred and twenty thousand pounds' worth of short-dated debentures or stock added to the debt of the colony. I maintain distinctly that that is the clear condition of the question. Instead of paying interest and Sinking Fund, as we are bound by law to do-instead of paying money—the Government ask us to create one hundred and twenty thousand pounds' worth of short-dated debentures representing the annual sum we have to pay into the Sinking Fund, and another lot of debentures for a like amount representing the interest due every year on the accumulated Sinking Fund. They pay these new debentures: into the Sinking Fund instead of cash, and they then ask us to remit a portion of the property-tax. That is altogether wrong. We have no right to consider that there is any portion of that Sinking Fund available until the inscription of loan has taken place. When that has taken place there will be a certain amount of surplus rendered available for revenue purposes. At the present moment there is no relief to the revenue, and there can be no relief until the inscription has been accomplished. With respect to the property-tax, the position that has been taken up is that this tax falls upon the consumer. I do not see how that is the case. As far as people dealing in money are concerned, they may add a percentage to be paid by the persons to whom they lend the money; but how any merchant, who, we will say, pays £100 in property-tax, can distribute that amount over the price of the goods he sells. in his store, I do not at all see. As far as the property-tax itself is concerned, it ought to have been carried out according to the American system, and that would probably have rendered it a popular tax. Its present unpopularity is largely caused by the vexatious way in which it has been levied. If the people had been left to assess themselves, as they do through their elected valuers in America, I do-

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not see any reason why it should be a less popu-.lar tax here than it is in the United States, where it is almost universal, and where it has been very successful. The assessment is made by the people; every one knows what has been assessed, and this publicity is the real check. It is found to work admirably, and to work without friction. I need hardly say that I shall vote against the second reading of this Bill. I recorded my vote on a former occasion in that direction, and I see no reason to alter my views. I fail to see how any Government should object to have more money placed at its disposal, and therefore take it for granted that Ministers will not regard this as a Ministerial

Property-Tax Bill.

question, Mr. MACANDREW.—The fault I find in this Bill is that it does not go far enough. should have preferred very much that it had taken off the whole of the property-tax. I think that is the proper thing for this House to do. I must say that I am surprised at my honourable friend the member for Caversham. He admits that the remission of this tax would be a good thing, but says this is not the proper or the right time to do it. If it be a good thing we cannot do it too soon. Now is the time to do a good thing. I entirely dissent from the view expressed by the honourable member for Geraldine. He seems to think that this is to relieve the rich and wealthy classes. I venture to think that, if you could dissect the various classes of the community, and divide them into two, you would find that the class who are not subject to the property-tax are probably the wealthier of the two. I think it would be found that the so-called poor—that is, those who come under the £500 exemption—are far more able to bear this tax than the so-called wealthy class. It is not all gold that glitters in this country, nor, I suppose, anywhere else. My honourable friend the member for Akaroa seems to object to reducing the tax because it involves more borrowing. I presume he means that doing away with the Sinking Fund implies more borrowing. In one sense it may be so regarded; but, if it does imply more borrowing, it means borrowing from ourselves, and I have no objection to borrow any amount if we can only confine it to borrowing from within ourselves. That is my objection to the Bill which was passed a little while ago: that it does not provide for borrowing the money within ourselves, which I believe could have been done; and I hope we shall live to see the day when it will be done. I should much rather the Bill had gone "the whole hog," and taken off the whole tax instead of one-half.

Colonel TRIMBLE.—I shall say a few words in reference to the general principle of taxation. The Premier has told us that when you levy a property-tax the working-classes have ultimately to bear it: that is to say, the propertyowners, by one means or another, gradually shift the tax off their own shoulders to the shoulders of the working or producing classes. There is no doubt at all that in any system of taxation the whole object of the statesman is to adjust the taxation so that it will be the

least felt throughout the community, and that the springs of industry will be least affected. That is a principle in which I apprehend the Premier would agree with me. Well, the Pre-mier has said that, if we levy a tax upon property, that tax will gradually spread over the whole community until all will pay so much alike. Suppose I grant that that is the case although I deny it—suppose I grant him that that is the case, I would just point out, by illustration, how it would work. In the old days the poll-tax was the ordinary form of taxation. Now, suppose that we, in order to make every man pay exactly his own share and not more, agreed to levy a poll-tax; and, as we require a revenue of £3,000,000, we should have to levy £6 per head upon every man, woman, and child in the country. Suppose you went to a working-man and said, "You must pay us £6 per head for yourself, your wife, and your six children." He would stare in blank amazement. He would know that you were aware that the thing was impossible. But the Premier would no doubt say to him, "In the end you must pay it. It must come out of your labour, and it is far better for you to pay over this £40 right off to me direct, than that we should take it from the propertyholders, because you will be saved the expense, and we shall be saved the trouble of all these intermediate operations. The trouble and expense would really have to be paid by you, and, if you pay as I desire, this loss will be saved to you." If you look at the matter in that light you will see that the argument of the Premier is utterly indefensible. What we want to do is this: to ascertain where realized property lies, and how to get that property, or so much of it as we require, into the Exchequer without burdening the people; and I maintain that not only is theory in favour of the pro-perty-tax, but that all practice, all history, is also in favour of it, as being the least injurious to the springs of industry. We have had a notable instance of that in the practice of our fellow-countrymen at Home. Indirect taxation through the Customhouse comes upon the consumer in a double form, and it seems to me that we are losing sight of this grand doctrine of political economy in this country. When you levy a tax through the Customhouse it is not merely the amount of the tax that the consumer has to pay, but all the intermediate profits upon that tax. I have reckoned with considerable care the cost to this country of getting a million and a half through the Customs. During the last three or four years we have raised a million and a half through the Customs. Now, for every million that we have collected into the Treasury, the people have paid not less than a million and two-thirds. The importer does not put his profit upon the £100 which he has paid for the goods, but upon the £120, which includes duty; and every intermediary puts his profit upon the whole cost up to the point at which the article comes to him. Now, the great differ-ence between a direct tax and an indirect tax lies in that. In the case of the direct

tax, you see at once the cost of producing it; the cost of the indirect tax you never mow, because not one man in ten thousand will take the trouble to analyse the cost of the articles he consumes. In the Old Country we have found, by forty-two years of experi-ence, that with every remission of indirect taxation there has been an increase in the comforts of the people and an increase in the wages of the people; and the theory that the property-tax — or the income-tax, which it really is—gradually percolates down until it reaches the working-man has proved to be a fal-Wages have risen some 70 per cent., even including those of the agricultural labourer; and the cost of the comforts of life has decreased by at least 30 or 40 per cent. The only thing that has increased, so far as the workingclasses are concerned, is the rent of houses, and that is nominal. I say it is only nominal, because the houses—or, rather, the hovels—which working-men lived in forty years ago are now unknown. The average term of life has been increased - owing to the increased comforts of life, and owing to better drainage and better houses—in the case of males, by two years, and, in the case of females, three years. So that in every way direct taxation has benefited the community. There is an old proverb that "Ye canna' tak breeks aff a Hielan'man," because he does not wear them; and that is the case in re-gard to taxation. You may talk as you like, but it is realized property that has to pay the taxation of the country; and your efforts ought to be directed to getting at that realized property in the most direct manner, and at the least expense to all concerned. When you do that, you will have a perfect system of taxation. With regard to the decrease of the property-tax at the present time, I entirely agree with those who have preceded me in saying that it is most imprudent. We have been told that we do not require it; and we were threatened early in the session that, if we should throw out a Bill of this kind, fore-shadowed in the Financial Statement, we should do so at our peril, because then the tax would be swept away altogether. Now, let us see whether we do not require the tax. We are going to use £244,000 per annum which by statute we are bound to provide, and by this means we are getting a nominal surplus upon the operations of the year. But I apprehend that we have already paid into that fund a portion of the sum we are required by statute to pay into the various sinking funds that have to be replenished from time to time. To that extent, at any rate, we have parted with the cash; and how are we to get it back? The only way is to pass over new debentures, new promises to pay, to the fund we have already paid the cash into; and with regard to the balance we shall have to use similar means. So that, to all intents and purposes, at the very time we are remitting £140,000 of the property-tax, we are actually borrowing £244,000 in order to pay the liabilities we are bound by statute to pay. That is

the whole meaning of it. And what is thevalue of it? The Premier says the property-tax prevents capital from coming into the country. In answer to one member he sneeringly says, "You have no mortgagees in your part of the-country;" and to another, "You are not a book-keeper." Now, I am not a loan agent,. and, unfortunately, I am not a lender of money ;: but I venture to say this; that I have had more financial experience than the honourable gentleman has had in the actual transactions of life, and I say that the true test as to whether money is flowing into this country or flowing out of it is this: What is the price from day to day of money in the moneymarket? It is notorious that money is cheaperin this country now than it was at the time when the property-tax was imposed. Then, how can you say that the tax keeps capital out of the country? I heard a statement made in this House, either this session or last, that. money had been kept out of the country, and I traced out the instance given. The particulars I could get simply amounted to this: that a. gentleman had written from Home and asked. the price of money in the market here, and the charges, if any, upon it; but that nothing came of the inquiry. He simply wanted to know what investments there were, and what profit he could get. He wrote to New Zea-French agents, and, finding he could put his money out to better advantage in another direction, he did not send it here. That proves nothing. On the other hand, we know that the flow of money into this country has been continuous ever since 1879, when we were told that, by means of this tax, we were going to stop it. I would recommend honourable members not to be influenced by this talk. about the stoppage of money coming into the country. If we give good security - and part of that security consists in keeping up the national credit-then people will trust us with their money, if they have any to lend. Butif we bolster up our credit, and if our affairs,. though showing a fair front, are not substantially sound, you may depend upon it that money will seek safer channels for investment; forit is not so much a high rate of interest as a safe investment that capitalists seek. I have discounted as low as seven-eighths of 1 per cent., that is to say, at the rate of 17s. 6d. per-cent., and the reason was that the bills were good, and that the security was unquestionable. At the same time, in the capital of another country you could place money at 10 per cent. without any difficulty. And what was the reason? It was that in the one case there was. but little risk, and in the other there was great risk. And so it will be with us. If we keep up our credit, even at the expense of our own purse, not only shall we be able to carry out our public borrowing at a lower rate, but private individuals will also be able to borrow at a lower rate

Mr. SMITH.—The honourable member for Taranaki, in speaking on this measure, has spoken very strongly against the reduction of:

the property-tax; but it is a most remarkable fact that, when the honourable member for Egmont proposed to reduce it in 1882, the same honourable gentleman then thought it the wisest piece of legislation that could be in-troduced. The fact of the matter is that, if the honourable member for Egmont had brought down this measure, the honourable gentleman would have been of the same opinion still. Anything the honourable member for Egmont does is right with that honourable gentleman, and it would have been, then, "Oh, the Government are charged with reducing the property-tax; but I tell the House that that will be a great benefit to the colony. Look at the working-classes: see what immense advantages they will gain: think of what improve-ments will be carried out which are at present virtually put a stop to by this property-tax." That is the line of argument which the honourable gentleman would have followed. But what is the line he has taken to-day? To-day he is the line he has taken to-day? would rather see a reduction made in the Customs duties. Well, if we turn to the pages of Hansard we shall find that, when the honourable member for Egmont proposed to increase the Customs duties from 10 per cent. to 15 per •cent., the honourable gentleman voted straight for the increase.

Colonel TRIMBLE.—Allow me to explain. I have never advocated an increase of the Customs duties, and I have always protested against anything approaching an increase of them.

Mr. SMITH. - Then the honourable gentleman's protest did not go with his vote. He voted straight enough on that occasion, and, in- deed, I do not know of a single occasion since I have been in the House when the honourable gentleman has not voted for anything which the honourable member for Egmont has proposed. I do not know whether he spoke on that occasion. He may have been silent, and that might be taken as showing that he was opposed to the proposal; but, at any rate, he voted straight for it. He says that this property-tax is a very good tax, because the working-classes do not feel it so much as they feel other taxes, as it only affects the matter of the increase of rent, which is a very small matter to them. I can tell him that to the workingman this matter of rent is one of the most important. The working-man may do without many luxuries, and he may use less tea and sugar; but he cannot do without a roof under which to live. Therefore this question of rent is very important to him, and it has been greatly affected by the property tax. The great effect of this reduction will be that it will cause the expenditure of money in the country. There is no doubt that this tax has caused the stoppage of improvements throughout the country; and that is a much more im-portant matter than the question of how it is raised, or how it affects the working-classes or any other class. It affects the whole country, because every one knows that anything he may spend in the way of improvement will be taxed. We make every one, poor and rich,

pay a tax on his improvements, and the consequence is that no improvements are made; while the man who locks up his property and does not improve it escapes. There is one point on which the honourable gentleman is very strong, and that is that the workingclasses do not pay the property-tax. Well, to my mind—and I speak as a business man who has some knowledge of the matter—they pay the largest share of it, and for this reason: that they have to pay on the millions of pounds' worth of goods that are imported into the colony, and which are either lying in the wholesale merchant's store or on the shelves of the retail trader. There are thousands of pounds' worth of goods which lie on the trader's shelves from year to year, and he has to make the property-tax on them out of his customers. That is far worse than the Customs, which you pay once, and are done with it; but, with this property-tax, you have to pay the Customs duty first, and then you have to pay the pro-perty-tax on that. This goes on from year to year, and the trader is obliged to make up the amount out of his customers; so that it is absurd to say that the working-classes do not pay this tax, or that the £500 exemption frees them. Therefore I am quite in favour of the reduction of this tax, and only hope that it will be That would swept away altogether next year. be a most popular thing to do, and then, if we want another tax, let us have one which will not tax the improvements of settlers and absolutely prevent them improving their property.

Mr. GILLIES.—I cannot help thinking that a great deal of this discussion is altogether outside the question at issue. If it were a question of proposing to do away with this tax and to substitute another, many of the arguments used would be in place; but, inasmuch as it is not a question of that sort, but simply whether we shall reduce this tax, it seems to me that a great deal which has been said is not at all applicable. What we have to look at is, What is the policy of the present Government? and, in that view of the question, I cannot understand how honourable gentlemen who have given their support to that policy can now turn round and oppose this measure. I think that, if there is any measure which has been brought forward which can be said to be essentially a measure of Government policy, it is this. What practically is the view the Government have taken? They have looked round the country and found it in a very depressed state. They have found that their predecessors—the doctors called in to diagnose the patient-have said, "We must keep him on very low diet; we must extract every sixpence out of him, and make him feel the pinch of taxation. That is the only way to bring the patient round. There is no use helping him. We must make him feel that he has been living far too fast, feeding too richly, and drinking too much champagne. We must bring him down and make him understand that, for the future, he will have to lay aside those colonizing works on which his aspirations have been so set in the past." Therefore they put on taxe-

Mr. Smith



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tion, which we are now asked to reduce. In megard to that tax, I beg incidentally, as a question of fact, to correct the honourable member for Taranaki in respect to its effect on the price of money. I can say, from my own experience, that, before this property-tax was put on, money was lent as low as 6 and 61 per cent., and that it has never been lent so low as that since this tax has been imposed. But, to return to the question before us, the Government has said, "We must have a different way of doing things and of dealing with the affairs of the colony. We will encourage industries, and do all that we can to help the settlers to become prosperous, by relieving them of the burden of taxation." And this measure goes exactly in that direction. I am not prepared to say that this measure will restore prosperity to the colony; I am not prepared to say that it is going to make the wilderness blossom like the rose; but I say it is one of a series of measures which will tend to restore confidence generally throughout the colony. Many honourable members seem to me to take a very shortsighted view of this question. They seem to think that directly dealing with a matter is the only way in which that matter can be affected. Now, my experience in life teaches me that, if you wish to stem a great current, it is no use your going to try and stop it directly. You must go up to the source of the stream, and put in a weir here and an obstruction there, in order to turn the current gradually and effectually, and in that way you will bring about this end: that the current, which before could not be interfered with, will be totally changed. Now, Sir, with regard to this very question, let us take an illustration which has occurred to me, and which is recalled to my mind by the memorable occurrence which happened to-day. I teel sure that every member of this House and every New Zealand colonist must have hailed with delight the fact that the great chief Wahanui came to the bar of the House to-day to plead his cause. It is a new era. It tells its own tale. It tells us that the days of war and bloodshed and trouble with the Natives have gone by. I was pleased to hear the eulogium which the Minister of Native Affairs passed on his predecessor, and it is unnecessary for me to repeat what I have said before this in praise of the honourable member (Mr. Bryce); but I would point out that it is not only to the honourable member for Waitotara that praise is due. There is a gentleman in this House now who, to my mind, after the member for Waitotara, did more to settle effectually the Native difficulty than any other man in the House. I say that, before the public works policy was introduced by Sir Julius Yogel, there was but one question which agitated the whole of New Zealand, and that was the great Native difficulty. That was the great trouble which overshadowed the whole colony, and politicians and statesmen were only judged of as they understood or did not understand the Native difficulty. All our interests and desires in the South, no matter how urgent

they might be, had to give way to this one question. In the House and out of the House, in the newspapers, and everywhere else, there was but one question discussed, and that was the Native difficulty. Every one who will cast his mind back to those days will bear me out. But when the public works policy was pro-claimed, it was like lifting a load off men's minds. They then found something else upon which to direct their attention; they at once, in many directions, set to opening out and developing the resources of the country; and I say that one of the greatest benefits, if not the greatest, that the public works policy of Sir Julius Vogel distinctly conferred, was to begin the process, now completed, of ending the Native difficulty. That is an illustration of how great events are effected by totally differ-ent means. You would not, at first sight, say that the public works policy then initiated would have any effect, or any great effect, upon the Native difficulty; but the result was, unquestionably, that it had a very potent effect indeed. Now, I do not say that this measure reducing the property-tax will have a very potent effect immediately upon the prosperity of the colony; but, combined with other things, undoubtedly it will have the effect of gradually restoring confidence and bringing us back to that state which we have lost-namely, the state of having faith in ourselves, of having faith in the country, and believing the country is what we thought it was when we came to it and cast in our lot hereputting heart in us, in fact, and enabling us to help forward everything that is for the benefit of the country. Therefore I gladly support the Bill. Before sitting down, however, I would repeat what I said in the debate on the Financial Statement—that I should have preferred to see this tax given to local purposes. The Premier has referred to that before, and I hope it has not been lost sight of. I think that is the direction in which the remainder of the tax can be very well disposed of altogether.

Mr. PEACOCK.—I think that the question before the House is really not one whether we should have a land-tax in place of a propertytax, but whether a property-tax shall be imposed at all, and whether it shall be imposed at a reduced rate as compared with last year's. For my part, I think that the Premier's reply to certain honourable members who expressed themselves against the Bill is a complete one, and shows the inconsistency of the position those honourable members have taken up. I refer to the honourable member for Auckland East and the honourable member for Akaroa, who, although they profess to believe that the property-tax is really not paid by property-holders but by the mass of the people, yet are prepared to vote against this reduction. A good deal has been said upon the question as to who pays the property-tax. I differ entirely from the Premier on that point. I say that, undoubtedly, the property-holders are those who really do pay the tax. If you look at the statistics laid before Parliament in the 336

previous session, the matter will be quite appa-The total amount of real estate after deducting £26,000,000 for Crown and Native lands and education reserves, is £75,000,000, and the amount taxable is £45,000,000; while there is exempt, under the £500 exemption, no less than £30,000,000. Then comes personal A great deal has been said about merchants' stocks in warehouses being taxed, and the amount of the tax being added to the price when sold, so that the consumer really has to pay. If you look at the table showing returns by owners, you will find that the value of live stock—cattle, sheep, &c.—amounts to £8,542,117; merchandise, to £9,710,794; furniture, household goods, musical instruments, works of art, &c., £4,062,738; cash in hand or on deposit in banks or otherwise, £5,731,251; money on mortgage, £19,423,585; and debts owing to those persons, £10,259,921. fore, out of a total, in round numbers, of £59,000,000, only £9,000,000, or about onesixth, is included as the value of stocks in warehouses, of which so much has been made. Now, it cannot be said for a moment that the tax on furniture, jewellery, works of art, carriages, and so forth, amounting to £4,000,000, is in any sense paid for by the mass of the people. Then, with regard to the question whether the merchants charge the tax in the price of the goods, is it not a fact that goods have not been increased in price by the imposition of the property-tax? That is a direct means of ascertaining who pays the tax on merchandise. Then, there is another way of considering that question. A considerable por-tion of merchants' stocks are not bought by the working-classes, while of the necessaries of life it may be said that the stocks are turned over several times in a year. But the property-tax is assessed on the whole of the goods in the merchant's warehouse and on the whole of his property; and it is impossible for him, in the competition which exists in trade, to put on the -fractional amount that would represent the property-tax on the goods he sells. It is undoubted that competition, in trade, really rules the price of goods; and the man in a small way, with whom the £500 exemption bears a larger proportion to the whole stock than with the man in a large way of business, could undersell the latter if he attempted to add the property-tax to the price of his goods. The same remark applies to mortgages. It is said that the man who borrows the money has to pay the property-tax in the shape of increased rate of interest. Now, I say the rate of interest is not at all regulated by that. It is really regulated by the amount of money available for being lent, and the demand there is for it. And even if it could be said that the amount available is affected by this tax—which I do not admit—that could not apply to one-half of the mortgage-money, for about one-half is colonial capital. I feel perfectly certain in my own mind that the propertied classes pay the tax, and that those who hold that the mass of the people have to pay it are under a great mistake.

a property-tax, although for equalizing the burdens of taxation I should have preferred if a reduction had not been proposed in this direc-

Mr. MENTEATH.—The speech made by the Premier was certainly a most interesting one. I think myself it must have been made with the collateral intention of keeping up the debate until after half-past five, for he really laid himself open in so many places that it is impossible for less than about twenty speakers to point out the number of errors made. With reference to the assumption that by the reduction of the tax the working-men will be benefited instead of the landowners, I think the honourable member for Newton has just shown pretty conclusively that a very small fraction of the tax, even if the Premier's contention is correct as to the property subject to the tax, can be afterwards made the subject of payment by the working classes. But the Premier forgot to mention that a very large proportion of the property-tax is virtually a land-tax. Out of eighty-one millions of taxable property, forty-two millions, or something more than half, is land. Now, throughout the career of the Premier we have always heard that it is fit and proper to tax land; and yet here is a Government of which the Premier is a member making a remission in favour of the land-owners of one-half of this taxation; because one-half of this tax must fall exclusively upon the land-owning classes. Then, again, there is another considerable fraction of the property which is caught by this tax represented by mortgages, and the Premier pointed out conclusively that the mortgagees had indemnified themselves against the operation of the tax by raising the rate of interest on mortgage contracts. Now, mortgage contracts are generally made for a term of years, some of them for a very long term; and, according to the argument of the Premier, the mortgagees, many of whom live out of the country, while deriving the full benefit of the increased rate of interest, will also have the full advantage of this remission of property-tax. The Premier also gave us a disquisition on the evils of taxation, and I suppose we can see the direction in which those evils are to be removed. know that the obligations we are bound to fulfil until the Sinking Fund is relieved are to be paid with borrowed money. We have heard from the Colonial Treasurer that there would be no harm in paying interest out of borrowed money; and I have no doubt, if the proposals of the Government are pushed to their logical conclusion, in the course of a session or two, when perhaps they have a more subservient majority than at present, we may see proposals brought down for defraying all the axation of the country out of borrowed money. That will be but the logical conclusion of the homily preached to us by the Premier. But the only unfortunate thing is that there are other parties to the bargain. Unfortunately, there are some creditors whom we have to consult, and who may express dissatisfaction with this I shall vote for the Bill, on the ground that it is course. Otherwise, so far as New Zealand and

the taxpayers are concerned, I am sure it would be a most brilliant policy to borrow the total amount, from year to year, of our taxation. I am sure that the Government which brought down such proposals and carried them out would be perfectly certain of a permanent seat on those benches.

Mr. J. W. THOMSON. — So many members have referred to the fallacies of the Premier's speech that I shall not refer to them. But it appeared to me that the Premier was under the impression that this was a measure for repealing the property-tax. This is a Bill to repeal one-half of the property-tax, or it is a Bill to reduce the taxation of the country by, say, £140,000. That, naturally, suggests for consideration the question, What part of our taxation is it best to remit? It appears to me that this is not the proper part. I think there are other kinds of taxation that we might remit. I myself have always been in favour of a total remission of the sugar duties, and I would much rather remit those duties in toto than remit one-half of the property-tax. The introduction of this Bill also naturally recalls to our minds the occasion for having a property-tax at all. Why have we a property-tax? It is not long since there was neither land-tax nor property-tax; the revenue was chiefly raised from Customs. The reason why we had first a land-tax, and have now a property-tax, is simply this: that it is necessary to have it in order to make good the deficiency of interest on the cost of our railways-at least, I have always understood that the necessity for a land-tax or a property-tax at all is simply to make good that deficiency. — ("No.") — An honourable gentleman says "No;" but there is a large deficiency. From papers laid on the table of the House, I presume that the de-ficiency in interest from the railways this year will be, say, £250,000; or, in other words, it will take the whole of the property-tax at last year's rate to meet the deficiency on the milways alone — and that is not taking into account the interest on our roads and other public works. Still, you propose to remit half the property-tax, or, in other words, to cast upon the people the burden of bearing, say, one-half of the deficiency of the interest on our public works. And this, I think, is altogether wrong. It is the property-holders who ought to bear this deficiency; and it is chiefly on that account that I oppose this Bill. Now, what have we done this very day? Have we not passed the second reading of a Bill to borrow £1,500,000? What amount will the interest on that be? I see that the rate of interest is put down at 5 per cent.-more than we have been in the habit of paying for our money recently. Suppose we get the money at 4 per cent.; there is £60,000 for interest. There is the other million to be raised in January next, which means £40,000 for interest—the two together, £100,000; and that is altogether irrespective of the loan for the North Island Trunk Railway. I consider that the time is inopportune: that is the word which has been used, and I think it is a very appropriate word.

The present moment is inopportune for reducing, at all events, this particular taxation; or I may say that to reduce any taxation at the present moment is inopportune. We are going into the money-market to borrow large sums of money, on which we shall have to pay interest; and I think we might do much better than reduce our taxation just now. There can be no question that, in a short time, within a year or two, we shall have to put on this tax again, or some other tax which will bring in at all events an equal amount. And we all know how very inconvenient it is for men to be paying low taxation one year and high taxation another year. Of course it is a relief for the time—there can be no question about that - and I have been debating with myself whether to vote with the "Ayes" or "Noes." In regard to voting with the "Ayes," there is this to be said: The financial policy of the Government has been framed so as to admit of this remission, and, as the session will close in a few days, there will be no opportunity of any other remission: this being the case, one might vote with the "Ayes." At the same time, the Bill is unsound in principle, and it has occurred to me that I should probably be doing my duty in voting with the "Noes," as a sort of protest against action of which I cannot approve.

Mr. SUTTER.—All this virtuous indignation might have been saved, because the opponents of the reduction might have waited till we got into Committee, and then could have moved that the tax should be the same amount as last year.

An Hon. MEMBER.—No; the amount in the Bill cannot be raised.

Mr. SUTTER.—At all events, the Premier has told us distinctly the object of the remission of the tax. The Government are going to devise some system of local finance by next session, and they propose to do away with this tax altogether, and substitute another, to be settled on the local bodies, so as to prevent them coming to this House with demands for local works. At the present time there is a real necessity for the tax on that account. By the Public Works Statement you find that the local bodies ask for no less than £400,600 for roads and bridges. It is the intention of the Government to do away with this tax altogether, and allow the local bodies to tax themselves to make their roads and bridges themselves. This is one branch of the policy the Government have in view for next session. I hope the House will go to the vote and decide the question.

Mr. HAMLIN.—I, like the honourable member for Clutha, feel somewhat in a difficulty as to how to vote on the measure before the House It is at all times very difficult for any honourable member who desires to represent a district fairly and faithfully in this House to vote against any measure to reduce the taxation of the country; but, in my case, the difficulty arises in this way: What does a reduction of the property-tax mean? It means that eventually a land-tax will be introduced. And what does

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that mean? It means that the people I have the honour to represent in this House will have to bear the whole burden of the taxation of the country, as against a property-tax; and, as such, I must say that I am averse to a reduction of taxation in this case. We in the country have not obtained anything like a fair share of the proceeds of the large borrowing New Zealand has engaged in since 1870, and therefore I, for my part, cannot agree to this reduction, simply because I know that the intention is, within the next ten months, to introduce a measure to impose a landtax.—("No.")—My honourable friend says "No." but we have had it most unmistakably indicated, not only in the Speech with which this session was opened, but in other directions, that it is the intention of the present Government to introduce a land-tax at no distant date. At all events, as soon as the opportunity arises, as soon as the measure can be carried, the property-tax will be swept away and a land-tax imposed on us. And I wish distinctly and fairly to say at once to the House and to any Government on those benches that I, at any rate, will not be one to vote for sweeping away the property-tax with a view to introducing a land-tax, because I say that by that you at once introduce class taxation, and I, for my part, am not going to submit to that. I was somewhat amused by the argument of the honourable member for Bruce, who remarked on the fact that we had had a Native chief of very considerable importance addressing us from the bar of the House to-day -which is no doubt a very important factand the honourable gentleman proceeded to argue that the fact of that chief appearing here was due to the public works system introduced in 1870. I say the honourable gentleman knew nothing about the case; and I say, without fear of contradiction-I do not care who rises to endeavour to do it—that we have no other person than the honourable member for Waitotara to thank for the present state of feeling among the Natives. I have not always been in accord with the honourable gentleman's policy; sometimes I have differed from him materially; but, at the same time, I say that to him, and to no one else, is due the praise for the present state of Native policy. He has always stated he was going to do a certain thing, and he has carried it out; and the country and this House have always backed him up. Our experience of previous Native Ministers was that they were fertile in great promises, which they never carried out. They tried to do this, that, and the other; they introduced a sugar-and-flour policy; and we all know the result. honourable member for Waitotara's policy was different. He made the Natives understand that when he said he was going to do a thing he would do it, and that when he said he would not do a thing it would not be done. The Natives came to recognize that fact; and to that honourable member, and to the Government of which he was a member, is due the present state of feeling among the Natives, and not to the public works policy introduced in

1870. As I have said, I feel that I must oppose this measure, for the reason that, though I ar at all times prepared to vote to relieve thos whom I represent from their severe burden of taxation, I should feel that, if I voted for reduction of this tax, I was assisting to impos a land-tax. For that reason, I cannot see m way to vote for the measure before the House

and therefore I shall oppose it.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I was unprepared for a debate on this Bill. It seems to me that real all that has been said this afternoon, if ther was any real meaning in it, should have been said very much earlier in the session, when those who wished might have given effect t the views they have uttered. I have only few words to say in reply. The honourable member for Caversham expressed his opinion that the present Colonial Treasurer and the previous Colonial Treasurer both desired to creat floating debts for the purpose of funding them I will not enter into the question as far as it relates to my predecessor; but, as far as it relate to myself, I have not the remotest notion or what ground the honourable gentleman former his opinion. The honourable member for Auck land East has, I understand, raised a pro test against the reduction of .the tax. If : recollect aright, after the Financial Statemen was made the honourable gentleman expressed strong approval of it, and I understood that he strongly objected to the property-tax, which i is the intention of this Bill to reduce. Then as regards the honourable member for Tara naki, who says it is notorious that the rate for money has fallen since the property-tax has been imposed: we know that rumour is not a very useful thing to depend on; but I may say as a matter of fact—and other honourable gentlemen here can corroborate me-that, or the renewal of mortgages which have fallen is since the property-tax was imposed, the mort gagees have insisted on charging 1 per cent extra, to cover this property-tax and the con-tingencies of its increase. In other words, while three farthings has been charged as the tax, they have insisted on putting on fiw farthings, to cover the risk of increase. That is the honourable gentleman's notion of relieving the burden: to me it is an odd one Now, with regard to the honourable member for Egmont;—and he will, I know, pardon me for not having referred to him first, though he led the discussion. The honourable gentleman has said but very few words, but he has said them in a manner which has quite convinced us of his determination. He asked us if we appreciate the question of the incidence of taxation; whether we had reflected if it equitably affected the various classes of people; whether we were not endeavouring to release the rich and to burden the poorer classes. Then, he made, I think, an indirect reference to the Customs. Now, I will say a few words in reply to the honourable gentleman. As regards the Customs tariff generally, my opinion is that the tariff is one which very fairly affects per-It is 🛎 sons in proportion to their means. discriminating tax, and a tax which, to a

It depends upon large extent, is voluntary. the persons who expend money to what extent they will expend money upon dutiable goods. As far as food is concerned, they are free from taxation; and, regarding other matters, it depends upon the amount of money they choose to spend how much they are taxed. And I think, taking it fairly into consideration, we may say that the Customs revenue, by a sort of "rule of thumb," indirectly taxes all classes of the community at a rate of percentage closely proportionate to the amount they are expending. I may admit, Sir, that there is one very great defect in the Customs tariff, and that is that, owing to the free admission of goods belonging to the various departments of the Government, the Government and this House itself, by not taking into account the duties which would be paid by the Government if those duties were charged in the ordinary way, have not a correct view of the cost of articles in the country, and that local producers suffer very much in consequence. However, that is not a question I need pursue at present; but, when the honourable gentleman speaks of the poor and rich classes, of different classes in the community, I should like to ask him exactly what he means. It seems to me it may be said that, relatively to their occupations in this country, the classes which are the poorer classes are those which in other countries are The labouring-class, for the richer classes. example, should certainly not be the poorer class in this country. I would ask whether a labouring-man, who earns, as he ought to earn, good wages in the country, is as poor as a clerk, for instance, who, on a slender pittance, has to keep not only himself, but his family, under circumstances which entail upon him, whether he wishes it or not, a heavy expenditure. Now, the difference between my honourable friend and myself in relation to classes is this: For my part, I think it very desirable we should not make class distinctions, and the honourable gentleman finds it necessary to make class distinctions.

Property-Tax Bill.

Major ATKINSON.—No.
Sir J. VOGEL.—Where would be threefourths or seven-eighths of the speeches he makes about the country if he did not make class distinctions? His speeches deal essentially with class distinctions. Where else would be his project of national insurance? Where would be all those social questions in which the honourable gentleman delights, and which depend directly upon one part of the community being overburdened with wealth and another part overburdened with poverty? The difference between the honourable gentleman and myself is this: that I would endeayour so to conduct the affairs of the colony that there should be no poor class in the colony. Persons who are able to work—I am not speaking of those who, by illness or anything of that sort, are not able to work—should not be poor in a country like this. They should have employment, and they should be well paid for it. That is what I consider the great principle of colonization. I am quite convinced

that a low rate of wages does not mean prosperity to a country. I am quite convinced that, when the labouring classes are able to earn high rates of wages, then we have true prosperity. Therefore the difference between the honourable gentleman and myself is this: that, whilst I say we should have no poverty in the country—whilst I say we should so conduct our colonizing operations as to be able to afford employment in this country; yes, Sir, employment for more than twice as many people as there are now in the colony; and that we should be a prosperous community — the honourable gentleman apparently believes it necessary to manufacture a poverty-stricken class, by driving capital away. He does not say those words, but his acts tend in that direction. There can be no more ridiculous and absurd delusion on the part of the labouring-classes than to believe, and there can be no greater sin on the part of educated people than to try to lead them to believe, that capital is opposed to and injurious to the interests of the working-classes. Drive away capital, and where are the labouring-classes to get money from, however industrious they may be? Then, the difference between the honourable gentleman and myself is this: I think the capitalists should not be driven away, and the honour-able gentleman thinks—or, rather, I do not know whether he thinks so, but he acts as though he thought—that they should be. The honourable member for Bruce made use of —I was going to say—a happy simile; but I can hardly say that, because I am going to use the same, and it would be like praising myself. He told us that the late Government, in their treatment of the patient, had always prescribed low diet, whilst what the patient really required was stimulating and nourishing The honourable member for Egmont reminds me of a very remarkable character in history-Doctor Sangrado, in "Gil Blas" — whose only idea for all diseases and all sufferers was, "Bleed, bleed, bleed." Now, absolutely, this afternoon, when we have, so to speak, finished the business of the session. when we have made all arrangements by which we simply require a certain sum of money—about £130,000—where can be the use, what the possible object, of inflicting a property-tax for double the amount we require? Yet the honourable gentleman, in that desire to "bleed, bleed," comes down and tells us he wishes to double the taxation. No object is stated; the honourable member has not shown that we have over-estimated the revenue. He There is no has accepted our calculations. reason why we should increase taxation, except on the cruel principle which leads a boy standing at a window-pane with a pin in his hand to vivisect house-flies-that we should teach the people we can tax them. This is a yearly tax, and if we can only save them from half of it for one year we are entitled to the gratitude of the people of New Zealand. Why on earth should we impose unnecessary taxation upon them?

Major ATKINSON.-No, no.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I know the honourable gentleman entirely disagrees with me, and be-lieves there is a need of keeping up taxation. There was a famous saying of Gibbon Wake-field that, "if you intended to throw the money into the sea, it was still desirable to exact for the land a fair value;" and I think the honourable gentleman would parody that and say, "If you were to throw the money into the sea, it is still desirable to take out of the pockets of the taxpayers a certain amount of money," to keep them up to the knowledge of what it is to pay taxes, and to teach them to treat the tax-collector, I suppose, with proper courtesy and consideration. I entirely disagree with the honourable gentleman, and I express my dissent. I think the honourable gentleman has an idea that taxation discourages extravagance in every direction; and he says to a person who lives in a six-roomed cottage, "Four rooms will do; and you will save two rooms;" to a person who has a piano, "Why are you so extravagant? had much better teach your daughter to work, and not to waste time in music." He may not say that in the exact words, but, under the guise of what he calls "thrift," the honourable gentleman has done more than anybody I know to discourage persons who can afford expenditure for the refinements of life from going to that expenditure. The labouring-classes would be nowhere, there would be no occupation for them, if persons who can afford money for such things are not to be allowed to expend it. For the Government to say to merchants, "You must not over-import;" to say to persons who are inclined to forward gold-mining, "You must not invest in mining companies;" to say, "You must not do this, or the other: keep your money: wait, wait"—is a false policy of interference altogether.

Major ATKINSON.—Hear, hear.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I am glad to hear the honourable gentleman say so. Now, let me ask the honourable gentleman this: What is the effect of this property-tax? It has a clear honourable gentleman say so. effect. Why, Sir, its clear effect is this: that it discourages expenditure of every kind; discourages a man from making improvements; discourages a man from taking advantage of the improvements of science; discourages a man from taking advantage of or encouraging art in any form. In whatever shape a man may expend his money; no matter how much—probably 20 per cent. in Customs duty—he has paid on what he imports, he is charged rent beyond that in the shape of the propertytax. As honourable gentlemen well know, my opinions are very strongly in favour of doing away with the property-tax altogether. painful to me to bring down a Bill continuing I believe, a tax that I believe is unnecessary. if we had not, in a chivalrous notion of the demands of a sort of understanding that had been arrived at, felt ourselves precluded from making a rate which would cover the charge of local charitable institutions, we might have done away with this hateful tax altogether. Sir, I am strongly of opinion that it is better to

have no tax the indirect effect of which is to drive away capital, and to reduce the means of expenditure from all sources for the development of the resources of the colony; but, if there is to be a tax of the kind, a moderate land-tax, localized in its application, is, to my mind, a fair one; and, if it were necessary to go beyond that—which I, for one, do not suppose it will be—I say a tax upon the earnings of the people is certainly much fairer than a tax so senseless as this upon property. Why, the very persons you tax most heavily may be the persons least able to afford the tax. There is no reason for concluding that, because a man happens to have a certain amount of property, he is able to pay a tax upon it. That property may be useless to him; he may be trying to struggle on for years, so as to make it a productive property; and then you step in and say, "You want the last blow, to destroy you: we will give it you, by the tax gatherer." An income-tax is incomparably a fairer one, although, I admit, an exceedingly inexpedient one in a country like this, where it is so very difficult to average the earnings of the people. I should like to see the propertytax done away with next year altogether. In the meantime, it is impossible for me to understand how honourable members can ask us this afternoon, when the five or six days before the session closes are needed to settle our other Bills, to cruelly tax the people to double the extent that it is necessary for us to do. Such a thing passes my comprehension. If honourable members had wished that this tax should be doubled, in order that other taxation might be remitted, the time to do that was earlier in the session, when we showed what our intentions were. The Financial Statement was free from any concealment what-We have been charged with a multitude of offences-in fact, with most of the offences dealt with in the Police Offences Bill; but concealment has never been charged against us. It was well known what our intentions were. No complaint is made until the last moment, when we are told that it is exceedingly inexpedient to relieve the people of half this tax. As far as I can make out, the most logical reason given for not reducing the tax is this: that, if you give them the relief for a year, their education will be so neglected that they will require to be told what is the meaning of paying the tax at all. That reminds one of the policy pursued with regard to the fellahs of Egypt, and to the subjected races of other countries, where harsh means are resorted to by the governing races. I do not think the people of New Zealand will This year, about object to the remission. Christmas time, they will be asked for only half the amount that was demanded of them last year, and they will eat their Christmas dinner with greater pleasure in consequence. And I do not think we need grudge them that pleasure. If taxation is necessary in future, they can wait until it comes. As far as I can see, it will not be necessary; but, whether it is necessary or not, it is the duty of the Government and of the House, when they see the

Hobbs

means of saving the people, aye, if only for a year, to do so with the greatest pleasure. The House divided.

#### AYE6, 41.

Allwright	Joyce	Shrimski
Ballance	Lance	Steward, W. J.
Bevan	Larnach	Stewart, W. D.
BBradshaw	Levestam	Stout
Brown	Macandrew	Sutter
Cadman	McKenzie, J.	Thompson, T.
Duncan	McMillan	Thomson, J.W.
Fraser	Pearson	Tole
Garrick	Pyke	Turnbull
Gillies	Reese	Vogel
Grigg	Richardson, E.	Walker.
Guinness	Ross	Tellers.
Harper	Samuel	Peacock
Holmes	Shephard	Smith.

#### Nors, 21.

Atkinson	Lake	Rolleston
Bruce	Menteath	Russell
Bryce	Mitchelson	Trimble
Conolly	Moat	White, W.
Dodson	Montgomery	Tellers.
Grey	Moss	Barron
Hamlin	Richardson, G	

### PAIRS.

For.	$oldsymbol{A}$ gainst.
Buckland, J. C.	Buchanan
Coster	Johnston
Cowan	Fergus
Dargaville	Wilson
Mackenzie, M.	. Beetham
Gore	Hurst, W. J.
Morris	Hirst, H.
O'Callaghan	Wakefield
Taiaroa.	Hakuene.

Majority for, 20.

Bill read a second time. On the motion for committal,

Mr. SEDDON said,—I desire to explain why I called for a division on the motion for the second reading of this Bill. I had an object in view: not that I had any want of confidence in the Government, but I wanted to see how many there were in this House who would vote for relief to the property-owners in New Zealand.

Major ATKINSON.—The Premier introduced so many fallacies and so much new matter, and the Colonial Treasurer did the same, and both honourable gentlemen were so pointed in their reference to me, that it will take half an hour to expose the fallacies which those honourable gentlemen have thought it necessary, at this late period of the session, to drag into the debate.

Mr. STOUT.—I do not think I mentioned the

honourable gentleman's name.

Major ATKINSON.—Most pointedly—half a dozen times at the very least. The Premier

saked me if I ever saw a merchant's books. Mr. STOUT.—That was when you interrupted

Major ATKINSON.—I want to talk to the honourable gentleman about his knowledge of

political economy and some other matters. I am in this difficulty: I do not want to delay business. All I want to know, before I finally decide, is, what the Government intend to do about sitting to-night, or when they propose to sit again; because I do not think, from the marked way in which both those honourable gentlemen referred to me, and the gross fal-lacies they gave utterance to, that I can, in justice to myself, to the House, and to the country, permit those fallacies to remain on

Sir J. VOGEL.—I hope I said nothing of a

personal nature.

HOUSE.

Major ATKINSON.—Oh, no; not in the least. It is a matter for argument; I want to show the fallacies of those honourable gentlemen. I do not want to delay the stages of the Bill, if can effect my purpose in any other way, and I am willing to agree to an adjournment till Tuesday

Mr. ŠPEAKER.—If the committal of the Bill be now agreed to, the honourable gentleman will have an opportunity of speaking on the motion that I do leave the chair.

Bill ordered to be committed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. STOUT moved, That the House adjourn till Tuesday.

The House divided.

#### AYES, 29.

Atkinson	Gillies ·	Rolleston
Ballance	Grey	Samuel
Bevan	Larnach	Stout
BBradshaw	Macandrew	Thompson, T.
Brown	Mackenzie, M.	Thomson, J. W
Bruce	Moat	Tole
Bryce	O'Conor	Trimble.
Cadman	Reese	Tellers.
Conolly	Richardson, E.	Fraser
Dodson	Richardson, G.	
•	Mama 00	•

#### NOES, 28.

21020, 201	
Levestam	Stewart, W. D.
McMillan	Sutter
Menteath	Turnbull
Montgomery	Vogel
Peacock	Walker
Ross	White, W.
Shephard	
Shrimski	Tellers.
Smith	Holmes
Steward, W. J. Seddon.	
Majority for,	1.
	McMillan Menteath Montgomery Peacock Ross Shephard Shrimski Smith Steward, W. J

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes to six o'clock p.m.

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Annexation and

Tuesday, 4th November, 1884.

First Readings — Third Reading — Annexation and Federation — Napier Harbour Board Bill—Wanganui Harbour Board Empowering Bill—Life Assurance Policies Bill—Beet-root Sugar Bill—Westland Education District Subdivision Bill—West Coast Settlement Reserves Bill—Land Bill.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READINGS.

Consolidated Stock Bill, New Zealand Loan Bill, Property-Tax Bill.

THIRD READING. Hokitika Steam-Tug Bill.

ANNEXATION AND FEDERATION.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY. - Sir, in moving the motion standing in my name, I trust the Council will not consider it discourteous on my part if I offer no observations upon a subject on which, probably, there may be great diversity of opinion. The resolutions suggested by the Government are such as, I think, will meet the views of the Council, and I will content myself at present with merely moving the motion standing in my name. I know there are honourable gentleman in this Chamber who have given this subject a great deal of attention, and it will be a pleasure, no doubt, to hear the valuable suggestions they will offer on a subject of such importance.

Motion made, and question proposed, "Whereas, at a meeting of delegates from the following colonies - namely, Fiji, New South Wales, New Zealand, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia—held in Sydney during November and December, 1883, the following resolutions were agreed to:-

"1. That further acquisition of dominion in the Pacific, south of the Equator, by any foreign Power would be highly detrimental to the safety and well-being of the British possessions in Australasia, and injurious to the

interests of the Empire:

" '2. That this Convention refrains from suggesting the action by which effect can best be given to the foregoing resolution, in the confi-dent belief that the Imperial Government will promptly adopt the wisest and most effectual measures for securing the safety and con-tentment of this portion of Her Majesty's dominions:

"'3. That, having regard to the geographical position of the Island of New Guinea, the rapid extension of British trade and enterprise in Torres Straits, the certainty that the island will shortly be the resort of many adventurous subjects of Great Britain and other nations, and the absence or inadequacy of any existing laws for regulating their relations with the native tribes, this Convention, while fully recognizing that the responsibility of extending the boundaries of the Empire belongs to

the Emperial Government, is emphatically of opinion that such steps should be immediately taken as will most conveniently and effectively secure the incorporation with the British Empire of so much of New Guinea and the small islands adjacent thereto as is not claimed by

the Government of the Netherlands:

" '4. That, although the understanding arrived at in 1878 between Great Britain and France, recognizing the independence of the New Hebrides, appears to preclude this Convention from making any recommendation inconsistent with that understanding, the Convention urges upon. Her Majesty's Government that it is extremely desirable that such understanding should give place to some more definite engagement, which shall secure those islands from falling under any foreign dominion; at the same time, the Convention trusts that Her Majesty's Government will avail itself of any opportunity that may arise for negotiating with the Government of France with the object of obtaining the control of those islands, in the interests of Australasia:

"'5. That the Governments represented at this Convention undertake to submit and recommend to their respective Legislatures measures of permanent appropriation for defraying, in proportion to population, such share of the cost incurred in giving effect to the foregoing resolutions as Her Majesty's Government, having regard to the relative importance of Imperial and Australasian interests, may deem

fair and reasonable:

"'6. That the Convention protests in the strongest manner against the declared intention of the Government of France to transport large numbers of relapsed criminals to the French possessions in the Pacific, and urges Her Majesty's Government to use every means in its power to prevent the adoption of a course so disastrous to the interests of Australasia and the Pacific Islands:

"'7. That the Convention expresses a confident hope that no penal settlement for the reception of European criminals will long continue to exist in the Pacific, and invites Her Majesty's Government to make to the Government of France such serious representations on

this subject as may be deemed expedient: "And whereas, at the said Convention, a draft Bill to constitute a Federal Council of Australasia was also agreed to: And whereas, in pursuance of the undertaking given by the delegates from the Colony of New Zealand, it is desirable that the resolutions of the said Convention should be submitted to this Legislature:

"This Council resolves,-

"That it agrees generally with the resolu-tions of the said Convention; but, in order that its views may be specifically expressed, it

resolves as follows:-

"(a.) That it approves of the steps taken by the British Government for the establishment of its rule ever New Guines, and hopes that like measures will be taken for a protectorate over the islands of the Pacific Ocean not under the dominion of any stable Government.

"(b.) That this colony is willing to pay, in proportion to its population, a share of the sum of £15,000 proposed by the Imperial Government.

"(c.) That it desires respectfully to protest against the transportation of criminals to the

French possessions in the Pacific.

"(d.) That it requests the British Government to make such representations to the European Powers as will prevent the maintenance of penal establishments in any of the Pacific Islands.

"(e.) That the establishment of such a Federal Council as is proposed in the Con-

vention's draft Bill is premature.

"(f.) That, so far as the Bill aims at enabling the colonies to jointly initiate legislation on questions of common interest and importance to the several colonies, it has the

cordial support of this Council.

"(g.) That, to place the proposed measure in accordance with these opinions, it will be necessary to vary the Bill so as to provide—First, that the Federal Council shall not make representations to the Imperial Government direct, but to the several Colonial Governments; second, that any measure it initiates shall not have any force within any colony, nor affect any colony, until it is adopted by the Legislature of such colony."—(Hon. Mr. P. A. Buckley)

P. A. Buckley.)

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.—As a point of order, without special reference to the question, I should like to offer this suggestion to the Council: These resolutions are supposed to, or will be taken to, express the opinion of the General Assembly of New Zealand, and not the sentiment of any one Chamber of it. The course of considering them simultaneously, as is now proposed, may lead to a conflict of opinion on the question, or to a difference in the forms of expression in the resolutions themselves. I would suggest to my honourable friend that it might be more convenient for these resolutions to be passed in one House, and transmitted for the concurrence of the other. I merely throw out this suggestion, as it seems to me a course which it is desirable to follow.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Speaking to the point of order, I scarcely see the advantage to be derived from that course. Each House will have its own opinion upon the subject; and, as to entire unanimity as regards the wording of the resolutions, I do not see that any injurious results would arise from our adopting resolutions similar in the main, but yet differing as regards certain details.

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL.—Speaking to the point of order, I agree with the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse that perfect unanimity is not to be expected; but, still, I think it would be well to adopt the course suggested by the Hon. Dr. Pollen, which I think is one usually adopted in resolutions of this nature. If this were done, something more nearly approaching unanimity of opinion would be arrived at than by each House at the same time discussing the resolutions separately. I hope the Hon. the

Colonial Secretary will see his way to postponing the consideration of these resolutions until we can ascertain what determination with regard to them has been arrived at in another Chamber.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Speaking to the point of order, I have no objection whatever to that course. Probably it would be convenient for the Council, and if the Council wish

it I have no objection.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—The Hon. Mr. Mantell said we should like to hear what the other House has to say; but probably the other House might wish to hear our views before forming their opinion.

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL.—I beg to move

the adjournment of the debate.

Motion for the adjournment of the debate until the following day agreed to.

# NAPIER HARBOUR BOARD BILL.

The Hon. Mr. HART moved, That, in the opinson of the Council, the course pursued by the Local Bills Committee on "The Napier Harbour Board Bill, 1884," should not be drawn into precedent. The subject of the Local Bills Committee had for some years occupied his attention. It appeared to him that the occasion to which he more especially referred in his motion gave an opportunity for stating what he believed to be the proper functions of these Committees. The Local Bills Committee to which the Napier Harbour Board Bill had been referred had rather failed in doing what he thought it was desirable should be done under the circumstances. In cases in which Bills sought to authorize a public body to borrow money, and where the result of the work to be accomplished might be that it would fall short of paying interest on the money, and a rate might be placed on the inhabitants of a given area, there seemed to be a special duty cast upon the Council, and upon the Committee, in reference to it. It was pretty certain that, on the occasion to which the Bill referred, there would be some opposition to the measure on the part of some of the persons whom it was proposed to rate. At all events, there would be a minority who would not be consenting parties to the passing of the Bill. And it was necessary, therefore, that the Committee to whom the matter was referred should see that due notice had been given to those who might be opposed to the Bill, so as to afford them an opportunity of being present themselves or by representatives. during the session of Parliament to oppose the Bill. But it was not every one who dissented from a Bill who would be able to afford the expense or the time, or who would go to the trouble, to attend for the purpose of opposing it; and, under these circumstances, it became necessary that the Council, through its Committee, should ascertain some facts in order to justify it in imposing, through the local body, a tax upon those persons who were otherwise unwilling to be taxed; next, that the work, when accomplished, would reasonably effect the purpose for which it had been constructed; and,

lastly, to put on record some statement of the evidence and of the facts upon which the Committee was satisfied that the work, when completed, would be reasonably fit for the purpose for which it was intended. He might say, with reference to the Napier Harbour Board Bill, that concerning the work to be constructed under it there was a considerable diversity of opinion. He had been informed that the Harbour Board itself was divided, and that the majority which determined upon the acceptance of work was the small one of five to four. The Committee had the opinions of six nautical men who were adverse to the pro-posed scheme; and one, whom he very much respected, gave as his reason for doubting the success of the scheme that there was no holding-ground within the area, and that it was all rock bottom. He (Mr. Hart) did not mean to say that the Committee were bound to accept these opinions—far from it.

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL was sorry to interrupt the honourable gentleman, but rose to a point of order, and wished the ruling of the Speaker as to whether the honourable member was not out of order in bringing again for dis-cussion the merits of a Bill that had been

decided.

The Hon. the SPEAKER thought the honourable gentleman was going beyond what was allowable, and was really bringing forward for discussion a second time what had been already discussed. He would suggest that it would be the best course for the honourable gentleman to move that it be an instruction to the Standing Orders Committee to revise

The Hon. Mr. HART had no doubt the Committee were satisfied with the evidence; but, unfortunately, they had left no record, on their minutes or in their report, of the facts on which they based their report. To call attention to this omission was his sole object in

bringing forward the motion.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON said that, under this motion, the action of the Committee was impugned after the Bill had been read a third time. The Chairman of the Committee was not present, but, as the member in charge of the Bill, he must say there was no ground whatever for the charge, which, from what he could hear the honourable gentleman say, was

that notice had not been given.

The Hon. Mr. HART said there had been so much conversation going on while he was speaking that what he had said was not pro-perly heard. What he objected to in the matter was that the Committee did not record the evidence of Captain Benson and another, or of the experts whose evidence satisfied them that the opinions of the persons to whom he had referred were not to be relied on.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON said that, after all, the motion was nothing more than a slur on the The time to take the objection Committee. was when the report was brought down, or on the second reading of the Bill, or on the motion for its committal. The motion was, he considered, unjust to the Committee-which had

Hon. Mr. Hart

taken a great deal of trouble—as it was clearly an attack upon the Committee. The members of the Committee had merely exercised their discretion as to whether the evidence should be taken by a shorthand writer, which would have involved considerable expense. He hoped the motion would not be adopted, and moved "the previous question.

"Previous question" agreed to.

# WANGANUI HARBOUR BOARD EM-

POWERING BILL.
The Hon. Mr. WILSON, in moving the third reading of this Bill, said it was evident, from what occurred in another place, that considerable differences of opinion existed regarding it. It was hotly debated in the other House, but was carried by a large majority. Then, a singular circumstance happened. It was announced in one of the papers that, although the Bill had passed the other House, measures would be taken to have a clause introduced into the Bill in the Council which would render the Bill inoperative. When the Bill came to the Council there was not any great opposition to its second reading, which was carried by a small majoity; but what had been predicted A clause was put in the absolutely occurred. Bill which was wholly unacceptable to the promoters of the Bill, but was carried by the Council. He was not asking for the question to be reopened now, but he would say that the clause was of such a stringent nature that the fulfilment of it would be almost impossible. When the Bill was brought into the other House, it was in the ordinary state with regard to the assent of ratepayers: that was to say, the majority of the ratepayers must agree to it. That was the general law under the Municipal Corporations Act of 1882, in which it was declared that all measures of this description, as to imposing new taxes or new rates, must be carried by a majority, without any plural voting at all. No objection was made to give plural voting up to a certain point—up to five votes—in favour of property, when every security that was wanted by property-holders was given. The Council, however, had affirmed that not only should that be given, but, in addition to that, an absolute majority of voters was to be required. It would be said, in answer to that, that a similar provision had been put in the Napier and Gisborne Bills. But there was this material difference: In those cases the object was to borrow large sums of money, and to put a large charge for rates on the ratepayers; and therefore it was considered that too much protection could not be given to those so made liable. But here the case was not analogous, as the raising of the money had been already authorized. Two-thirds of it had been spent; while the object was to empower the raising of a rate before the remainder was raised, it being now required. If this Bill were not carried—as he presumed that now it would not be—the works would be left partially com-pleted, and liable to be destroyed by the action of the sea. He thought the Committee and the Council had gone very far in providing that

so exceptional a consent should be asked fora consent almost impossible to be obtained, and quite outside of what was required in Bills of a similar nature. He thought that—what was very much to be deprecated—something more had been brought to bear than consideration of the merits of the Bill. He believed influence had been used to bring about in that Council what he thought was an undesirable result; and, under those circumstances, though he would move the third reading of the Bill, he would inform the Council that it would not, in the shape in which it had been put, be accepted in another place.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE had been astonished at one or two of the statements of the Hon. Mr. Wilson, who being a member of the legal profession, would, he (Mr. Waterhouse) should have thought, have known better the state of the law on points to which he referred. The honourable gentleman said this provision was exceptional, and that it was not

contained in the Municipal Corporations Act.
The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—Of 1882:
The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE said that by the Municipal Corporations Act a majority of one-fifth was required; but by the Act of 1880 that provision was repealed, and it was enacted, "If the number of votes given for the proposal exceeds one-half of the total number of burgesses, the resolution in favour of the proposal shall be deemed to be carried, and the Council may proceed with the proposal accordingly." At the same time, a similar clause was introduced into an amendment of the Counties Act. Consequently the provision was not exesptional, but was of almost universal application. Had the Bill been passed without this provision, then it would have been quite excep-tional to all their recent legislation. He did not think his honourable friend had shown any reason why the legislation in favour of the Wanganui Harbour should be of an exceptional character. The honourable gentleman intimated that he had heard, prior to its coming to the Council, that some course of a special character was to be taken with regard to this measure. He did not doubt for one moment that his honourable friend had heard remarks of that character; but there was scarcely a Bill which came to the Council as to which they did not hear statements that it was to be very much changed in its character before it left the Council. In fact, the whole object of the Council was to review the legislation passed in the other branch of the Legislature, and there was a presumption in regard to all Bills coming from the House that alterations would be made in them in the Council. These statements sometimes originated in this way: that honourable gentlemen in the other House who had been opposed to particular provisions in a Bill hoped to see them changed in accordance with their views when the Bills were before the Council, and sometimes gave expression to that hope. He did not know if his honourable friend meant anything more than that. If the honourable gentleman's statement was intended to imply that proceedings

of an extraordinary character were to be taken in regard to the Wanganui Bill, that special influences were to be brought to bear in reference to it, and that those special influences had been brought to bear, then he thought the honourable gentleman ought to prove his statements. As far as he (Mr. Waterhouse) was informed, there had been no special influences at work. there had been no special initiation of the Circumse taken was precisely the same as that taken in respect of the Gisborne and Napier Harbour Bills, except as to one particular to which he would refer shortly. The Bill was referred to the Local Bills Committee, and a suggestion was made in reference to it by that Committee, which was precisely the same as had been made in regard to the two other Bills, with one alteration, and that alteration was in favour of the Wanganui Bill. In the case of the Napier and Gisborne Bills it was provided that the ratepayers in the towns should pay a rate double in amount of that paid by the ratepayers in the country. No such provision had been made in the case of the Wanganui Bill, showing that, if there had been any exceptional treatment whatever, it had been in favour of this Bill. He was not a member of the Local Bills Committee, but he thought the insinuations of his honourable friend as to the treatment this Bill had received at the hands of the Committee were altogether unworthy of him. The Local Bills Committee or any other Committee might make mistakes, but, as far as he had observed, there was in all the Committees of the Council a sincere desire to treat Bills on their merits in every case, free from party or political influences. In the report of the Committee there was not the slightest indication of any influence on their minds, and not the slightest difference had been made, except to treat the Town of Wanganui more favourably than the Towns of Napier and Gisborne. But the Bill would have been very exceptionally treated if it had been allowed

Board Empowering Bill.

to pass in its original shape.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN said, if he remembered aright, by the District Railways Bill and other Bills under which it was proposed to impose an exceptional charge on property, not alone were two-thirds of the number of voters required to assent to the proposal before it could be carried out, but the number of votes must represent two-thirds of the property to be affected. There could therefore be no complaint of exceptional treatment in regard to this Bill.

The Hon. Dr. GRACE said, if there had been any exceptional treatment by the Local Bills Committee, that exceptional treatment had been strongly in favour of this Bill. This was the very first time the Council had had recommended to it by a Committee a measure for adoption by which certain districts were to be subjected to a permanent rate, while at the same time the Committee drew attention to the fact that another district which was to receive equal advantages was not to be subject to the rate. He said that was a course never before followed by a Local Bills Committee. When he had; on the second read-

ing, pointed out that blot in the Bill, he had been surprised to see the Council pass the Bill. It had been specifically shown that Rangitikei County would be equally benefited with Wanganui and Waitotara Counties, but was to be entirely exempted from rating. Surely that was very favourable treatment of the measure. The Hon. the Speaker having ruled, on an application from the Local Bills Committee, that it would be unreasonable to include Rangitikei in the rating district, as notice had not been given to the people of that county, it appeared to him (Dr. Grace) that the Committee should have recommended that the Bill be not proceeded with until all the area to be benefited was included in the rating district. Instead of that, the Committee had recommended that the Bill should be proceeded withmost favourable treatment of a measure, and a course which he, for his part, should not be prepared to adopt. So much for that portion of the honourable gentleman's argument. As far as he himself (Dr. Grace) was concerned with the measure, he wished to say that he had never said a word to any honourable member in regard to the Bill, but had simply written a note asking an honourable gentleman to move that the Bill be read that day six months, to give him an opportunity of speaking again. He had spoken quite openly against it on the second reading, and had given the grounds on which he had based his argument. He thought that, on the whole, the Bill received exceptional consideration; and yet serious injury had been done to the Counties of Wanga-nui and Waitotara by the County of Rangi-tikei being exempted from the operation of the Bill. Another contention of the honourable gentleman was this: that, in the case of the Napier and Gisborne Bills, the object was to raise a large sum of money, and to effect a large charge on the property of the ratepayers. Now, did the honourable gentleman know what it was contemplated to effect under this Bill? This was an effort in reality to continue the erection of a pier which was to go out into the open sea to scour a West Coast bar harbour. The bar was probably six hundred yards away from the mouth of the river, and, in the nature of things, the history of this procedure would be that, from year to year, they would have Bills before the Council seeking to borrow another £50,000 or £100,000, as required for the extension of it. one who knew anything about these bar harbours must know that a very large expenditure was required before a West Coast bar harbour was deepened by a pier. It must not be supposed, because the present measure before the Council only sanctioned the raising of £40,000, that that was to be the end of the affair. On the contrary, it was only the beginning. And that the Council should subject the County of Wanganui and the County of Waitotara to a permanent charge on the whole of their property for a work in which the County of Rangitikei was equally interested and yet was exempted from any charge, seemed to him to be a very unjustifiable course. They could

not get over this fact: that a permanent charge was a heavy tax; and it was a very serious thing to inflict such a charge, when both counties were distinctly averse to it. The honourable gentleman said that the measure would not be accepted by the House in its present form. He wished he could believe that.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—It is true.

The Hon. Dr. GRACE believed his honourable friend thought it was true, but he would draw the honourable member's attention to this fact: In clause 9 they found the words "votes exercisable," whilst in the 11th clause the terms used were "votes given at the poll." He therefore expected to see that the other House would accept the Bill as it was, relying on the favourable interpretation of clause 11 where in conflict with clause 9, and that there would be a great amount of litigation on the measure. He was sure the Council never intended to leave in clause 11, which was contrary to clause 9.

The Hon. Mr. HART.—Yes; and, where there is variance, the last clause will prevail.

The Hon. Dr. GRACE said that, when they were in Committee, clause 11 had been hurried over, and the Hon. Mr. Miller, who was Chairman of the Local Bills Committee, did not seem to realize the exact meaning of the alteration. What he meant to say was this: that, if the Council meant to maintain the course it had taken in respect to the Napier and Gisborne and other Bills, it would not be honest to alter this Bill as had been proposed by the Hon. Mr. Wilson; and, in order to see whether the Council was really in earnest about maintaining the protection of the ratepayers which was provided by the 9th clause, but which was nullified by clause 11, he would move, That the Bill be recommitted, with the view of altering clause 11 so as to make it in conformity with clause 9. That, he thought, would carry out the intention of the Council, and it would have the effect of returning the Bill to the other House in the state in which it was intended to be returned.

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN said that the statement that this Bill had not received exceptional treatment sounded rather strange to him. He felt inclined to say it had received exceptional treatment on its second reading, and again that day. The Hon. Dr. Grace complained that the Bill had been too favourably treated by the Council; but the honourable gentleman seemed to have altogether forgotten what he said on the second reading, when he stated that the measure had been introduced by trickery, and so forth. The honourable gentleman had also stated that this would be only the beginning of the expenditure, and that the Board would go on borrowing. But the honourable gentleman seemed to have forgotten that the rôle of engineer did not suit him at all. He had made statements there which had been contradicted by evidence given before the Committee by engineers; and, although he (Mr. Lahmann) should be most happy to put himself under the honourable gentleman's treat-

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ment when he was ill, he was sure he would not consult him if he was proposing to carry out large engineering works where professional skill was required. He (Mr. Lahmann) asserted, over and over again, that the Bill had received exceptional treatment, from the very beginning, in the Select Committee, as well as in that Council; and the upshot of it had been the passing of a clause by which a majority of people on the roll would have to vote in favour of the operation before the work could be carned out. That was nothing less than equibecause it could not be expected that people who lived sixty or seventy miles away in the sountry would take the trouble to go to the poll, and therefore a sufficient number would not vote to authorize the carrying-out of the proposal. To compare this Bill with the Napier and Gisborne Bills was out of the question. It should not be forgotten that, in the case of Napier, the country property exceeded the town property very largely. In Napier the mteable property was about one million, while in the country it was six or seven millions. In the case of Wanganui the rateable property was nearly the same in the town as in the country, and consequently the circumstances were different altogether. He had no objection to the Bill being recommitted, but he hoped that, while in Committee, clause 9 would also he reconsidered.

Motion for recommittal agreed to. Bill read a third time.

# LIFE ASSURANCE POLICIES BILL.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE .- I should like to have a little more information than we have yet been given before we agree to the second reading of this Bill. There is one clause which appears to me to be open to great objection. I refer to clause 35, which, as I read it, enables a married woman to effect policies of insurance on the life of her husband or the lives of her children. Now, I think that is a power altogether opposed to public policy. Honourable gentlemen might recollect that many years ago great attention was directed to the fact that burial clubs in England had a very injurious influence on the promotion of ctime, by giving inducements to the destruc-tion of children; and I think there was some alteration of the law made in consequence, with a view to preventing the continuance of those abuses. One can see at once that a provision of this sort, enabling a married woman to insure the lives of her husband and children, might be attended with results very injurious to the cause of public morality. The clause appears to me a very vital one in the Bill, and unless I have some satisfactory explanation in regard to it, or unless my honourable friend will consent to withdraw it when in Committee, I shall feel it my duty to oppose the Bill. Otherwise I have no particular feeling in regand to the measure.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—At this late period of the session, I think the Council has not time

sufficiently to consider a Bill of this importance; and therefore I move, That the debate beadjourned until this day three weeks.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I shall be quite prepared to make any reasonable amend-

ment in Committee.

The Council divided on the question, "That. the debate be adjourned."

Ares, 10.

Brandon Mantell Scotland
Chamberlin McLean Williamson
Johnston, J. Peter Wilson.
Kohere

Noes, 22.

Acland Fraser Peacock. Baillie Grace Pharazyn Barnicoat Pollen Hart Bonar Henderson Reeves Johnson, G. R. Reynolds  $\mathbf{Brett}$ Buckley, G. Lahmann Waterhouse Buckley, P. A. Ngatata Campbell Wigley.

Majority against, 12.
 Motion for adjornment of debate negatived.

many years, of referring all important Bills of this kind to Select Committees. Had this Bill been referred to a Select Committee it would have been gone through carefully and would have been properly investigated by a number of honourable members specially selected for the purpose; and we should have had their report, and been in a position to discuss it. and come to some decision on the matter:: whereas, according to the practice we are now drifting into, of having important Bills proposed in the Council, and not very elaborately explained on the motion for second reading, and then carried through Committee of the whole Council, it must necessarily follow that. a great deal of trouble will ensue, and our legislation will not be so useful as in former days... And I hope the honourable gentleman repre-senting the Government in this Council will

bear that in mind. There is not a safer way

of getting laws passed in the state in which

they should be passed than by referring them

to a Select Committee when they come before

the Legislative Council. It is on that ground, with reference to former votes I have given

during the present session, that I have voted

against certain measures-simply for the want

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL.—This is a marked instance of the result of the Council departing

from the practice which has guided it for so

of proper information, thus preventing me from taking an active part in the discussion, and compelling me to vote against the unknown.

The Hon. Dr. GRACE.—Sir, this is a matter to which I have devoted a great deal of active attention; and, although I admit there are certain bad features in the measure—perhaps. the most prominent amongst these being the extreme facility which it gives to insurers to borrow on their policies; yet I know that, when people are domestically pushed, they invariably do borrow on their policies—I think it would, on the whole, be an advantage to facilitate the means of life-insuring and cheapen.

the procedure. It is true there are certain principles-if I may so term them-in the Bill which are open to comment; but these principles open up such large questions for the consideration of social and commercial morality, that I do not hasten to give an opinion upon them. The amount to which a policy is pro-tected under this Bill—£2,000—is certainly very large, and I am not altogether sure that it is justifiably so. Nevertheless there are so many means, easily availed of by fraudulent debtors, to rid themselves of their property, and yet again to become possessed of it conveniently, that I do not know, looking to the necessity for protecting the good intentions of honest insurers, that perhaps it may not be justifiable to protect policies up to this amount. The great reason for which I look upon lifeinsurance business as being of so much interest in this colony is that it seems to me to be the only economical effort which is being largely made by colonists to hedge the general indebtedness of the State. Considering the habits of the colony—considering the vice of extravagance which is growing so rapidly amongst us—I feel we are justified in departing even a good deal out of the common to induce men to the practice of thrift; and there is no doubt that the insurance of lives tends in this direction. Lamentable evidence of the real condition of the colony is to be found in the amount and extent of borrowing, and the number of borrowers on their policies is very large at times. It will be found, Sir, that this will afford a better test of the real condition of the wealth of the colony, or of the saving habits of the colonists, than any estimate which can be formed from the savings-banks returns. For in all these colonies there is always a large amount of floating population whose savings affect savings banks returns; but people who insure their lives, like people who build their own houses, remain in the country and thus help to foster economy in it. The machinery of this Bill is somewhat complex, and the meaning of the clauses is not very clear to me; but the general drift and intention of the measure is to foster economy among the industrial classes, and, under these circumstances, I:must give it my cordial support.

Bill read a second time.

# BEET-ROOT SUGAR BILL.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said,—Sir, the object of this Bill is to provide a new industry in the colony, and also to retain in the colony a sum of somewhere about £600,000 per annum, which is now sent away for imported sugar. It will largely stimulate our industries, and it will enable farmers to turn their attention to a new industry; and I think it is the duty of the Legislature, when one industry fails, to endeavour to provide some new industry to take its place. Now, the large export of wheat from India, owing to the easy means which they have of working their farms there, and the low rate of wages, will always preclude this colony from competing with that place. Such

Hon. Dr. Grace

being the case, it is absolutely necessary that other provision should be made in order that our colonists may employ the land to some advantage. The fact that, if it succeeds in its object, there will be saved to the colony some £600,000 which at present goes away from it yearly for imported sugar, is, I think, sufficient reason in itself for introducing this Bill. But there are other good reasons. I think it will not be denied that our climate and soil are well adapted for the growth of beet-root and sorghum; and, if such is the case, I think it can be made manifest that the industry will be exceedingly profitable to those who engage in it. Supposing this is admitted, that our soil and our climate are both well adapted for the production of sugar-beet, then I think the question arises as to what evidence there is that this industry is likely to be a profitable one. I cannot do better than state this fact: that, while a few years ago the production of sugar from beet was almost unknown, it has now reached an extent which is most astonishing to any one who gives it his consideration. I hold in my hand an extract from Mulhall's "Dictionary of Statistics," in which it is stated that the total consumption of sugar for all nations is 3,670,000 tons, and, of this, 1,811,000 tons, or nearly one-half, is produced from beet. That shows the progress that has been made in the production of sugar from beet. Then he goes on to say that they have acquired greater information and more extended experience as to the best qualities of beet that can be grown, and he says, "Beet sugar has increased ninefold since 1853, and now gives 7 per cent. of saccharine matter instead of 4 per cent.: that is, for every fourteen tons of roots it gives one ton of sugar." I think, Sir, that such a state of things is highly satisfactory, and will act as an inducement to farmers to undertake the cultivation As I stated before, among of beet-root. the inducements to encourage this new industry there is this one: that it will give employment to a very large number of people, and to a class of people, moreover, who cannot always easily obtain employment. For example, there are a number of people here who are not able to act as mechanics, or to do any hard work. In connection with the growth of beet-root the labour is easy; and I believe the establishment of the industry will employ a large number of people who are not able to employ themselves in more arduous work. Then, the residuum, after the sugar is extracted, would be exceedingly useful in supplying food for cattle. The leaves and pulp are both useful for that purpose, and 100lb. of pulp is equal to 22lb. of good hay. The Bill enacts, in the first place, that, for the first 1,000 tons of sugar from beet-root or sorghum produced in the colony, a bonus of id. per pound shall be paid by the colony. I do not think that is too large an encouragement. In the second place it provides that, during a period of fifteen year, there shall exist a differential duty on all such sugar produced in the colony. The Bill only contains four clauses; and it is really so

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simple in itself that it does not require much argument on my part. I trust it will be read a second time and passed through all its stages. I feel satisfied in my own mind that the industry is a good one, and ought to re-zive the greatest encouragement at the hands of the Legislature. I do not think, Sir, I need so into all the statistics brought forward elsewhere by the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer: they appear in *Hansard*, and I should only be wasting time by doing so. I therefore content myself with moving, That the Bill be read a

second time. The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Sir, it is not my intention to oppose the second reading of this Bill. Not that I think that this Bill is a practical measure, or that I believe it will be stiended by any immediate beneficial results, but because the time may eventually comealthough it may not be for the next ten or fifteen years—when the circumstances of the tolony will be such as to justify persons enter-ing into beet-cultivation for the purpose of the manufacture of sugar, and meantime there can be no harm whatever in the Bill being included in the Statute Book. If the object of this Bill is to retain in the colony some £600,000 which at the present time is sent out of it for mgar, and also to stimulate industry, I venture to predict that that object will altogether fail of achievement. My honourable friend Mr. Reynolds has referred to the great progress made in the manufacture of beet-root sugar. It has been an astonishing progress, and the facts given by my honourable friend do not give a full idea of what that rate of progress has been. According to recent telegrams the growth of sugar in Europe for the present year will be no less than two and a half million tons, whereas the consumption of Europe is nearly four millions. The beet-root is found, owing to the improved modes of manufacture, to give a return equal to that of sugar-cane; and, as a result of the low price at which sugar is now produced, many of the West Indian islands are completely withdrawing from the sugar trade, and I have read a statement that in some of them it is probable that the last ton of sugar has been produced for some years. Sir, what have been the causes of this great growth of the beet-root industry? They have been that the circumstances of Europe have been peculiarly favourable to it; that the climate of Europe is peculiarly favourable to it; that the price of labour is very moderate indeed in those parts of the Continent in which the beet is used for the purpose of producing sugar; and that the refuse from beet is valuable for the purpose of feeding stock. These are the great causes of the astonishing development of the beet-root manufacture, added to the further important consideration that the culture of beet—and I may say that the beet requires a great deal of manure; it requires not only bone-dust, but guano, to produce a good crop—is so beneficial to the land that, for six years after a crop of beet has been cultivated, the effects of that cultivation and that manuring are said not to be lost.

Sir, if we want information with reference tothe beet we cannot do better than go back to the Blue Book of 1876, where will be found a mass of information on the subject, collected together by the present Colonial Treasurer, Sir-Julius Vogel. And after reading those papers. carefully, one cannot help coming to the conclusion that, however much we may believe that the cultivation of beet-root for sugar could be introduced into the colony with advantage,. yet such hopes are not likely to be speedily realized. Sir Julius Vogel, in the papers that he collected together, showed conclusively that. at that time the beet-root-sugar manufacture was one of the most profitable manufactures. in Europe; the refined beet-root sugar was selling at £37 per ton, and the raw sugar, which is the first product of the beet, was selling at £24 per ton. And he arrived at the conclusion that, allowance being made for the much higher rate of wages prevailing in these-colonies, with those rates for the produce, it. was within the bounds of probability, at any rate, that beet-root sugar might be manufactured profitably in this colony. But the circumstances since then have entirely altered. Refined sugar has gone down from £37 per ton. in 1876 to £19 10s. per ton; while the raw sugar has gone down from £24 per ton to-£12 15s. per ton; and it is evident from thesefigures that, if it was possible to grow beet-root profitably for this purpose ten years ago, it is utterly impossible to do so under existing circumstances. It is singular that the cultivation of beet-root for sugar—and I may here say that the beet is grown to great advantage in England — has entirely failed in that country. Large sums of money have been devoted to its manufacture, and Mr. Campbell, of Buscott Park, paid great attention to the matter, spending a sum large enough to be a fortune to others in developing the industry; but we all know with what result. The manufacture of sugar from beet-root has latterly-been extensively tried in America. There the climate is likewise peculiarly favourable to-the cultivation of the beet, and yet it has not been attended with a profitable result. Julius Vogel, in the paper to which I have referred, stated that the growth of beet-root for the purpose of producing sugar was being proceeded with to a considerable extent in California, and he appeared to anticipate, from its success there, that it would be taken up rapidly in other parts of the country. It was taken upin the State of Illinois, and after a few years was abandoned; and I hold in my hand reports of the Department of Agriculture in America for the year 1880, and they give the results of experiments in California. And with reference to this subject I may say that California possesses special advantages. In America there is an import duty of no less than £14 per ton.. This is a protective duty necessarily in its operation, and if they cannot grow, in America, where labour may be said to be much the same as here, sugar to compete with foreigners, when they have an import duty of £14 a ton, I think it will be admitted that it is utterly impossible:

Sugar Bill.

that any good result can come from our entering into it here. Well, this report upon the subject says,—

· Beet-Root

"In my opinion it would take many years for the beet-root sugar to be established on a large scale and paying basis unless Congress give it encouragement by offering a bounty. It is a well-known fact that all the factories that have been established in this country up to the present date have failed and been abandoned."

Unfortunately, as regards beet-root, the question of labour is a very important element. It is a crop that requires to be kept particularly olean, and requires the employment of a large number of field hands. In Germany, France, and Belgium these field hands are mostly the women and children attached to the households of the peasant proprietary. Their services are utilized, and in that manner the beet is able to be produced at remunerative prices to the grower. But our circumstances are so utterly different that I cannot for a moment believe it possible that the beet can be grown to advantage in this colony. Sir Julius Vogel, in the papers to which I have referred, estimates the cost of labour in America and England at two and a half times the cost of labour in beet-growing countries. The labour itself employed in the industry is almost the entire cost of the price of the article; and if, when sugar in its raw state was worth £24 a ton in Europe, and refined sugar £37 a ton, the price of labour was so high as to render its manufacture in America unremunerative, it -appears to me to follow, as a matter of necessity, that, now the prices are reduced to nearly half what they were, while labour remains the same, it is surely impossible that we can grow sugar to advantage in the colony. It is well that we should look at this matter calmly and deliberately - that we should not think we have a source of wealth here that is going to bring us out of our difficulties. Beet-rootgrowing will not do that. Eventually, when labour comes down, we may be able to manufacture beet-root sugar; but I hope it will be a long time before that state of things does come about; for we may depend upon it that the manufacture of beet-root sugar implies a low condition of wages, against which the workingclasses of this and the adjoining colonies would undoubtedly revolt. I shall vote for the Bill, believing that eventually the time will arrive when these coionies, as well as all countries in moderate climates, will have to be self-producing as regards sugar, and it is not undesirable that such a law should be contained in our Statute Book: not, however, that I for one moment believe that it will, for many years to come, be brought into operation.

The Hon. Mr. CHAMBERLIN.—The honourable gentleman who has just spoken has devoted himself entirely to one article, and this Bill deals with two—beet-root and sorghum. His arguments may be perfectly right—I do not say they are not; however, this Bill is purely a permissive Bill. As far

Hon. Mr. Waterhouse

as I read it, no one is forced to go into the industry; and I think very few will do so unless they see their way clear to make some-thing out of it. Again, this Bill is neither a protective Bill nor a free-trade Bill, for it is partly the one and partly the other; so I think I may say it is neither. If you look at clause 2, it is in a measure protective, because a bonus is proposed. Then, clause 3 is purely a freetrade clause, because it allows the industry to be carried on without any interference whatever, as far as taxation goes. Then, clause 4, again, is more or less a protective clause, for a duty is to be put upon sugar, and it is to be raised on the manufacture of sugar also to some extent. Therefore I look upon it merely as a Bill to encourage colonial industries. I may say that I entirely agree with the object of the Bill, and have to congratulate the Government on bringing in at last a measure that I can willingly and cheerfully support. I am sorry to say that I think the honourable gentleman who introduced it has not done his best to show us the desirability of it. He said very little in its favour. However, I will endeavour to make up the deficiency. The Bill deals The Bill deals with the question of taxation to a large extent undoubtedly, and I think the one fault in it is that it confines itself to two materials—beet-root and sorghum. The Bill should have been of a more comprehensive character; being a measure dealing with taxation, it ought to deal with it generally, and I think it does not go. far enough. I think, if we look to the returns of imports and exports, it will be seen very clearly that a change is required to set right the balance of trade. I see that for the last year there is a difference of no less than £1,100,000 against the colony, the imports exceeding the exports by that sum. Now, of course we cannot import anything into the colony, if we wish to deal honestly, without paying for it in some shape or other. If we do not produce things in the colony sufficient to exchange for these imports, we must, I presume, send hard cash for them. Therefore, Sir, I think it is an important matter to draw attention to the large number of articles that are imported into the colony which, in my opinion, the colony could do without, in so far that many of them can be produced in the colony, and others are luxuries, which the colony, if it is — as it is said to be—in a depressed state, should do without; and, if people will have these luxuries, they should be made to pay for them by very high pro-hibitive duties. I will just run over a few By-the-by, it is singular that, when I had made out this list of articles, when I cast it up I found the increased tariff would amount to within a few pounds of the defi-ciency between the imports and the exportsnamely, £1,100,025. I will now run over a few of these articles: Beer (bottled and in bulk), boots and shoes, carriages, china and porcelain ware, confectionery, earthenware, fancy goods, fish, and fruit.

Sugar Bill.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—I rise to a point of order. I do not think the honourable

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gentleman is entitled to discuss the whole tariff |

The Hon. the SPEAKER .-- I do not think the honourable member is out of order.

The Hon. Mr. CHAMBERLIN.—Well, Sir, I was in another place during the debate, and I heard member after member get up and discuss the question in the very same way I am now doing. I do not know whether the rules of this House are different from the rules of the other House. I am discussing the general question of taxation which is brought in under this Bill. Here we have to deal with a measure of taxation, and I hope I may be permitted to go on. I got on as far as fruit, hops, jams and jellies, jewellery, milk (preserved), opium, perfumery, photographic goods, tobacco pipes, plated ware, silks, spirits, tobacco, and wine. Well, this amounts to no less a sum than £1,125,000: that amount has to be sent out of the country to pay for these luxuries. For boots I think it is no less a sum than £168,000: The present duty realized upon this is £15,000, averaging about 9 per cent. That is not a very high tariff, and, as it is well known that these things can be made in the colony, I think it desirable that taxation should be increased upon these articles. With regard to fish, fish to the value of £50,000 is imported into the country, and only a duty of 1d. per pound is placed upon it. While we have here an enormous quantity of fish in every direction, we should not be allowed to import it at a nominal duty of 1d. a pound. Again, fresh fruit worth £82,000 is imported free of duty. Surely 1d. per pound would be a very desirable duty to encourage the growth of fruit in this country. Earthenware comes to £42,000, upon which 15 per cent. duty is placed; but, in spite of that duty, this large amount is imported every year. I presume this is principally the highest class of earthenware—china—which could very well be done without; but, if we do not choose to do without these luxuries, I think we should be made to pay for them. In that manner we could raise an income to pay our way. If we desire to be a free-trade country, let us have free-trade in every way. Undoubtedly, where one country can exchange commodities with another sufficient to pay for what is imported, free-trade is very desirable; but in this colony we are not in that happy position. Our wants are more than we are able to supply. We have to pay for these things in hard cash, and we must have more protective duties than we have at the present time. It is said by some people who are great free-traders that if your people cannot be employed in one thing they must go to another. But that is not the question. The question is now, How are we to find labour for the people? We have, by means of our policy of late years, introduced a vast number of people into the country who cannot be profitably employed in the few industries which already exist here, but which industries, I am happy to say, are increasing. Nevertheless, they are not sufficient to employ all the people; and therefore I think it is praiseworthy on the part of the Government to introduce a mea-

sure of this kind, in order to give an opportunity of finding employment to those who cannot at present find any, or, at any rate, to be put in the position of being able to cultivate beet and sorghum for the purpose of manufacturing sugar, if they can see their way to do it profitably. The sugar imported is of the annual value of £650,000, and the duty upon that at a halfpenny a pound brings in an income to the colony of £90,000 a year. That, of course, appears to be an enormous sacrifice to make for the purpose of encouraging this industry; but it must not be supposed that this sugar industry is going to jump up all at once so as to keep out imported sugar. It will be a gradual thing, and a lengthened period must elapse before it will interfere seriously with the import duty on sugar. I am afraid that will be so. I only hope it may not be. If six hundred and fifty thousand pounds' worth of sugar was manufactured in the colony, in two years that would be £1,800,000; and, at the rate of 7 per cent., that sum would be worth £91,000 a year, and would more than compensate for the loss of duty on the sugar. There is one thing about this: The money sent out for the sugar disappears, and the sugar dissolves within twelve months and is gone. The tobacco, for which we pay £81,000 a year, if it does not dissolve, is lost in smoke, and it does not do any permanent good to the country, the same as articles of machinery and such things, which last for years, and are of permanent benefit to the colony. Looking at the amount to be saved to the colony in indirect ways, if we are to be taxed it would be better to be taxed in this way. The saving of £650,000 a year would make an accumulation in ten years of £6,400,000, which would be worth to the colony, at 7 per cent., £420,000 a year. Now, an income-tax of 6d. in the pound sterling upon £45,000 a year, being the interest on the capital retained in the colony, would bring in the first year a sum of £1,116 a year. And, again, a property-tax of §d. on the £650,000 a year saved or retained in the colony would bring in a revenue of £2,031 a year, and double that amount the following year, and so on. I think that if this scheme turns out a success it will lead to great and permanent prosperity to the colony, and I am sure it will do so. The amount saved will be very large in the course of time, and will have the effect of creating prosperity and wiping away the depression from which we are now suffering. I trust that the Council will support the Bill, and I do not think it requires the agency of the Government whip in this Council, whom we have seen walking around this Council buttonholing honourable members. I do not think it required that.

have great pleasure in supporting this Bill.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.—My honourable friends here have found an unfortunate advocate for their Bill in the honourable gentleman who has just spoken. He discovers in it a measure of protection, and approves of it very highly in consequence. But the whole of the policy of the colony since its foundation has

been one of free-trade. The principle of freetrade has generally been recognized as that which should guide the fiscal policy of the Government and the colony, though now and then there have been slight departures from it. This is an unmistakable departure from it; and it is a most unfortunate departure also, in that it proposes to give the encouragement of a protecting duty to a business which cannot, for many years to come, be a reproductive or profitable industry. I think that this is so wide a departure from the established policy of the colony, for a purpose which at present is useless, that I am compelled to vote against

Beet-Root

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—After the very admirable and exhaustive speech of the Hon. Mr. Chamberlin, it can hardly be supposed that I can have much to say. I am going to support the Bill. I believe it is one which should pass into law, and remain on the Statute Book until it can be of use there: but it will not be of use until there is a much larger population than there is now in the colony. The cultivation of beet is very expensive, for, if it is intended to realize the maximum of profit, it is requisite to have five ploughings, ten harrowings, four rollings, two horse-hoeings, besides several hoeings by manual labour. With the present price of labour in this country it would be impossible to grow beet-root profitably. I should like to show to honourable gentlemen what the cultivation of beetroot is like in the larger part of Artois and Picardy. It has, in fact, changed the appearance of the country altogether. I will read ance of the country altogether. I will read a short extract from the best authority upon French agriculture. It says,—

"The growth of sugar-beet is greatly increasing the produce of the land; it means more corn and more cattle, and it is having a greater effect than in Flanders. Flanders grew, be-fore beet was introduced, such crops as permitted a long rest; whereas in the larger part of Artois and Picardy the farming was less 'intensive,' and the land dependent more upon the ordinary growth of corn required, or, at all events, had the rest of the bare fallow more frequently than it has now. Beet, indeed, whether used for sugar or distilling - and a distillery is now an adjunct of almost every large farm in the North of France-is changing the agriculture of France so rapidly that it seems likely that the present generation may see the fulfilment of the prophecy of Arthur Young, that the time would come when the relative position of the two countries—France and England—as to agricultural progress would be reversed, and France be as much before England in good farming as she undoubtedly is in soil and climate. As far as beet has penetrated, Arthur Young's words may be accepted as having already come true.'

That, Sir, is what beet-root cultivation is. Ten years ago those engaged in producing sugar in France were supposed to be in the same position as Americans who had "struck oil." But a very great change has taken place since, as the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse has pointed out.

The production of saccharine matter in the beet itself is also very capricious; it is not always the same, and for the last two years there has been a very great falling-off in it in France, arising from the fact that, in place of guano, a nitrogenous compost has been used which develops albuminous matter, but not saccharine matter. I have no doubt the time will come when this experiment will be tried in this country. But you would have to make a change in your fiscal regulations. On every beet-root farm there is a distillery, and the molasses put into it is made into spirits and sent down to Bordeaux, and sold as good cognac at 5s. a bottle. You will have to turn the molasses into whiskey, and I may say that there are now such improvements made in the process that the fusel oil is destroyed. I have drunk very wholesome spirits derived from beetroot, and I have no doubt that, when the time comes for making sugar here from beet-rootand I believe it will come—you will also distil spirits from the molasses, and I have no doubt you will be able to induce people to drink it. I shall be glad to see the beet-root industry introduced when it is possible, for at present we are importing sugar which is tinged with blood -the blood of the Polynesians who have produced it in Fiji, Queensland, and Manila. There is a peculiar danger in the use of some sugar. I believe two Wellington houses some sugar. I believe two Wellington houses are largely importing sugar in the produc-tion of which Chinese have been employed, and I should like honourable gentlemen to remember, when drinking their tea, that they may be swallowing the germs of leprosy, which have got among the sugar when being handled by Mongolians. I hope the Bill will pass its

second reading and become law. The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND.—I do not think it is of any great consequence whether we pass the Bill or not, for, if passed, I do not believe it will produce much effect, except that it may possibly entrap some unwary person into investing money in the purchase of plant from which he would get no benefit beyond the bonus that is offered. Several advocates of the measure in speaking on it have gone out of their way a little, and not altogether with advantage to their cause. The Hon. Mr. Reynolds told us that there are a very large number of cripples in New Zealand, who may be employed in this industry. My impression is that the people of New Zealand are not by any means so incompetent to work that they need that we should find industries for them. I think there is no country in the world where boys and young people are more eager to secure an independent position for themselves than in New Zealand; and my idea is that, in the existing state of things, it would be impossible to keep children at work on farms in the production of beet-root. However, the gravest objection I have to the Bill—and it is a serious one—is that the effect of passing it may be to induce some unwary person to invest capital in an undertaking which will not be and cannot be permanently successful. My objection to the Bill is on precisely the same grounds as

Hon. Dr. Pollen



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my objection to the East and West Coast Railway Bill — that it may be the means of entrapping some people into a bad speculation.

The Hon. Mr. G. R. JOHNSON.—It is my intention to vote against the second reading of the Bill, and I wish to state my reasons for doing so. Evidence brought before the Council in the speeches which have been addressed to us shows, no doubt, that it is a desirable thing that the cultivation of beet-root should be established in the colony, provided it could be done with proper chances of success. But those honourable members who have spoken in favour of the cultivation of beet-root have also pointed out that it is impossible at the present time to produce beet-root sugar at a profit; and, under those circumstances, I consider that those who spoke in that manner have really spoken in opposition to the Bill, although they have stated they intend to vote for it. Now, if there is one thing clearer than snother in connection with this matter it is that, if this industry is taken up at all, it will have to be taken up by powerful companies — persons having large funds at command; and therefore the Bill is not at all one to benefit those supposed most to require benefit in the colony — those persons who have not large funds at command. Nor do I think, if it were established by large companies, that it would be a widespread industry—one taken up by a large number of cultivators with the object of sending their produce to the companies to be manufactured. There would be very little chance that anything of that description would take place; and therefore I think, if this Bill is passed, it will be simply a measure to assist those who we might fairly say are quite capable of assisting themselves. Now, with regard to the Bill itself, I suppose it is a money Bill, and therefore that its amendment is not optional with us, and we must take it or reject it.—("No.")—The Bill is not very clear with regard to that. The 2nd clause gives a bonus of a halfpenny a pound on the first thousand tons of sugar produced. Now, I should like to know if that bonus is to be given on every ton as it is brought in by different people, or whether it is all to be given to the first producer of one thousand tons. It seems to me it should be more clearly put. Then, the next clause gives an exemption from Excise duty for a term of fifteen years. That is what I object to, simply on the ground that it is introducing a system of protection. It has been acknowledged by honourable members that the Bill will probably not be made use of if passed, and I would point out that the effect of passing it might be to create an undesirable precedent. Honourable members may remember that some years ago legislation was passed encouraging distilleries to be established in the colony, and certain conditions were made, under which two distilleries were established; but in a short time it was found necessary to do away with the exemptions made in favour of them, and large compensation had to be paid. Now, the 4th section of this Bill prowides that, supposing the advantages given by

the Bill are done away with within fifteen years, then compensation is to be given. Well, the lesson we learned from our experience of distilleries is a lesson that ought not to be quickly forgotten. It was certainly disastrous to the colony, for I think it cost at least £40,000 as compensation for doing away with the privi-leges which had been granted to the distilleries. Under these circumstances, I think it would be very unwise to pass this Bill. It is acknowledged by its supporters that it is not likely to be made use of for many years and therefore I say, let us not pass the Bill until the time arrives when it would be likely to be made use of. I think it would be a great mistake to put on the Statute Book Bills acknowledged to be of little or no use, and for this reason I shall vote against the present measure. If I could see any probability that the introduction at once of such an industry would be a benefit to the colony, I would willingly vote for it: but perhaps there would not then be any necessity for the Bill, because, if one could see a way of making a profitable industry, there would be no necessity for offering exceptional inducements such

Sugar Bill.

as are proposed to be given in this Bill.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—The first objection I have to the Bill is this: that we are proposing by it something not for the present time, but for the future, and a very distant future. I think that is exceedingly objectionable. Then, it occurs to me that it is not a genuine Bill at all, and is really brought in for the purpose of holding out inducements to people to believe that something will be done which the Government, who introduced the Bill, know perfectly well will not and never can be done. The honourable gentleman who moved the second reading of the Bill said it was necessary that some such Bill should pass, because the export of wheat had become unremunerative. To carry that to a logical conclusion, he ought to have said that the cultivation of beet-root in Europe—where the price of labour is infinitely lower than it is here now, and lower than, I hope, it ever will be—is only possible by a very large bounty on its production. I am not now going into the large question of Protection, but I wish to say this: that the Governments of France and Germany think it is a benefit to pay—what is practically a bonus - many millions a year for promoting an industry that cannot be supported without that assistance. Under these circumstances a large impetus is given to the trade; and, to look at the statistics that have been quoted, you would think that some great advantage takes place. The real fact is that, even in France, where public money to the extent of many millions a year is given for the support of the beet-root industry, that industry is in a very languishing condition at the present time, for this reason: that there is over-production; and there always will be. If the Government of a country is so illadvised as to give bonuses for the production of an article, it is quite clear there must be large profit on its production; and then the production is sure to become excessive, because every one goes into the trade. The consequence is that the beet-root-sugar industry, even in France, is not remunerative. As far as consumers are concerned, it is the fact that, while at the present time ordinary sugar for ordinary consumption can be purchased in London at 31d. per lb., in France it costs more than double, which only shows the large tax that is put on consumers for the benefit of the few people engaged in that particular industry. It is not a good thing at all, and, if the Hon. Mr. Reynolds's argument about the unprofitableness of wheat-produc-tion is worth anything in this connection, he should have advocated the giving of a bounty for the export of corn. No doubt that would be a loss to the country, but that is really what is proposed to be done in this Bill, and what is done in France and Germany at the present time. Though large bonuses are given for the production of sugar, it costs the consumer 4d. per lb.; while the consumer in London can buy it for 3½d. The Hon. Mr. Randall Johnson has raised the question as to whether this is a money Bill or not. I did not under-stand him to ask you, Sir, for your ruling as to whether this is a money Bill or not—whether we can amend it in Committee.

The Hon. the SPEAKER .- I do not think it' is a money Bill, in the strict sense of the term; but, at the same time, I do not think it is competent for the Council to make any alteration

in clause 2.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—Or in clauses 3

The Hon. the SPEAKER. — From a cursory examination, I do not think it is competent for the Council to alter either the 3rd or the 4th

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—That being so, the only possible ccurse for us is to throw out the Bill, and the result would not be anything to deplore. We have heard this session of great anxiety on the part of the Government to promote trade, especially with the South Sea Islands. How can they be consistent, in promoting a Bill of this kind? We know that a large manufacturing establishment has been erected for the express purpose of importing and refining sugar. I consider that a very legi-timate trade, and it is one which gives large employment and provides a cheaper article, and ought to be favoured in every possible way. But what would be the result of this Bill? It would have the effect of injuring that industry at once, and therefore I can see no consistency in the action of the Government. There was a Bill, which fortunately did not reach the Council, for establishing a company for promoting a large import trade, and I cannot see the consistency of the Government in promoting a measure of that kind and, on the other hand, bringing forward a measure like this, which could only have the effect of injuring the very industry they try to promote. I am not at all convinced by any arguments I have heard in support of this Bill from the Hon. Mr. Reynolds and the Hon. Mr. Chamberlin. I think their arguments are utterly irrational, and I

Hon. Mr. Wilson

believe that the promoters of the Bill know perfectly well it would have no effect. I therefore think it is not right to incumber the Statute Book with a useless Bill, which can have only one effect—that of inducing unfortunate people to go into a business that can only involve them in loss. If it is possible to eliminate clauses 3 and 4, the Bill may be allowed to go into Committee, because, although I look upon the giving of bonues as a doubtful method of encouraging industries, still it only happens once; but by clauses 3 and 4 you propose to bind posterity for fifteen years, and, since it has been ruled that we cannot amend those clauses, I shall oppose the second reading of the Bill.

The Hon, the SPEAKER .- I am quite sure that it is impossible to touch clause 2, but I am not sure as to clauses 3 and 4, and I think I should have time to consider, if any opinion is required, how far the Council has the right in Committee to amend or reject clause 3 or clause 4. It is a point that has been raised on other Bills, and I am not sure at present with regard to those clauses as to whether the Council has power to amend them or not.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—If we cannot erase those clauses, will you consider, Sir, whether we have power to add a proviso to them, or to add a clause to the Bill?

The Hon. Mr. PEACOCK. - I support the measure, although I do not think it likely to be immediately operative. But the effect of it may be to induce people to come into the country to start the industry. We know that people in Germany now are discouraged by the state of this industry there, and, if they see a measure of this kind on the Statute Book holding out inducements to establish the industry in New Zealand, it might encourage a number of them to come to this colony to start the industry. Of course, if the industry could be established in the colony, it would do a gree amount of good, and employ a large amount of labour. The effect of the Bill being on the Statute Book might be to bring people to the colony who understand the industry, and who would not be likely to waste money at all on it. but be able to carry it out. With respect to clause 2, I must say that I object to the system of bonuses. I do not object so much to the differential rate. In this particular instance I think it is proper we should foster a young industry. But I think that the giving of bonuses is detrimental, because my experience is that it induces people to go into a thing and to keep it up until they have secured the bonus, and then to drop it afterwards. Now, the differential rate gives it a character of permanency, and for that reason I agree to it. I shall support the second reading of the Bill.

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL.—I move the adjournment of the debate until to-morrow, to give you, Sir, time to consider the points raised. Debate adjourned.

WESTLAND EDUCATION DISTRICT SUBDIVISION BILL.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said the necessity

for this Bill arose from the fact that the Westland Education District had been divided into two districts under an Act passed in a former session, and it was necessary now to validate some things which had been done under the Act, and to make provision for the future carrying-on of education in Westland. overdue liabilities amounted to about £5,000. The two districts would not work together, and the result was that at the present time the colony was saddled with the administration of education in the District of Westland. If this Bill were passed the Government would take care that only such sums as were legally due were paid, after the accounts had been carefully gone over by the Audit Department. He understood that the Hon. Mr. Wilson intended to move the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee; and, such being the case, he did not think he need take up the time of the Council further at present. The Bill was absolutely necessary, unless the colony was prepared to pay a very large sum of money. He understood it was the desire of the Council that this Bill, after the second reading, should be referred to a Select Committee. were the wish of the Council, he had not the least objection to raise against it. What he wanted was the fullest information that could be obtained on the subject. One thing he might say, and that was that the Council would have a very great responsibility cast upon them if they threw out this Bill, inasmuch as, if they did so, the Government were not prepared to carry on the education of Westland, and would not take the responsibility upon themselves, as it would be contrary to the law. The late Government certainly did accept the responsibility, and, under the circumstances, they were perhaps justified in doing so; but, seeing that an opportunity was now given to the Legislature to remedy the existing state of affairs, if the Legislature was not disposed to deal with the question, the Government would not be justified in taking such a responsibility upon themselves: in which case there would be no education in Westland till such time as Parliament might have another opportunity of dealing with the question. He moved the second reading of the Bill, and understood that, after the Bill had been read a second time, the Hon. Mr. Wilson would move that it be referred to a Select Committee.

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN regretted that there was any necessity for bringing this Bill before the Council, as a subdivision of the district could only be accomplished by a sacrifice of a great deal of money. It was scarcely creditable, he thought, to the departments which had caused this split in the Education Board, as it proved a want of administrative ability on their part. He held in his hand a report by the Inspector-General of Education in which that officer stated that the division of the district would cause a great expense to the colony. In spite of that, however, he was of opinion that the Council could do nothing better than aggree to this measure, because the actions of the Education Board showed that they were not

fit to administer the public funds. Although he admitted that the people of the district that he came from—Greymouth—would be more or less dissatisfied if the district should be divided into two, still he could only acknowledge that there was no alternative, if education was to be carried on in Westland. He was the more inclined to support the Bill because the Government had promised to pay the debts which had been contracted by the Education Board, to the amount of £5,000, under certain conditions. A great portion of this money was owing to tradesmen, who had been kept out of their well-earned money for a very long time, and could ill afford to be kept out of it any longer. The circumstances of the case were fully discussed last year, not only by the Council, but before a Select Committee; and, as the Council last year came to the determination to divide the district into two, he hoped honourable members would approve this Bill, and agree to the second reading. failed to see that any good could come from referring the Bill to a Select Committee. Nothing could be ascertained by a Select Committee in addition to what was known to the Council last year.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON did not rise to oppose the Bill, and hoped there would be no further discussion upon it, because, were there any discussion on it, he could hardly trust himself to express his opinion with regard to the Education Board. He had communicated with the Government, and his views on the matter had to a certain extent received their approval. He intended afterward to move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND had never previously heard of any Education Board in this colony getting into debt to the extent of £5,000; and the fact that an indemnity was included in this Bill was enough to justify honourable members, not in opposing the Bill, perhaps, but in seeing that due care should be taken in the matter before passing the measure.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE thought this Bill showed the necessity of some such measure as that which he introduced some time back, which would have the effect of causing persons who were intrusted with the expenditure of public moneys to be a little more careful in the future than they had been in the past.

in the future than they had been in the past. The Hon. Mr. BONAR thoroughly agreed with the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse. He did not wish to enter into a discussion of the real merits of the question, which, in fact, came before the Council and a Select Committee last year; but he maintained that there was an absolute necessity for the present Bill. The indemnity referred to by the Hon. Mr. Richmond was an indemnity to the Government for illegally carrying on the system of education in the Provincial District of Westland. The circumstances of this case were such that he thought it would be better if they were not spoken of at all, although they might properly form the subject of inquiry at the hands of a Select Committee; but the less.

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said about it the better, because it was no credit to the district he came from and where these things had arisen. He understood that the object of referring this Bill to a Select Committee was to have the matter sifted, and not to postpone it. The Hon. Mr. Reynolds had said that, unless some measure of this sort were passed, the Government would decline to accept the responsibility of carrying on the educational system of Westland, which had been carried on illegally, he might say, for the past twelve months. He trusted the Select Committee would make their report at once.

The Hon. Mr. ACLAND thought the only ebjection to referring the Bill to a Select Committee was the fact that the time was so short in which to prepare a report. He believed he was a member of the Select Committee that considered the matter last year, and the mind of that Committee was that it was absolutely necessary for the cause of edu-cation in Westland that the district should be divided; and therefore he hoped the Council would pass this measure.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS, in reply, agreed that the Select Committee should report without delay. He pointed out that the Hon. Mr. Wilson had no intention to oppose the Bill in moving for a Select Committee, and he therefore hoped the Council would agree to read the Bill a second time, so that it might be referred to that Committee.

Bill read a second time.

## WEST COAST SETTLEMENT RESERVES BILL.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

The Hon. Captain FRASER said he had had a conversation with the Native Minister with regard to this Bill, and had come to the conclusion that no private member could acquire the information which had been alluded to; and therefore the Bill ought to come before the Native Affairs Committee after its second reading, to which course, he was glad to say, the

Colonial Secretary had no objection.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY said he had no objection to that course.

Bill read a second time.

# LAND BILL.

On the motion for the committal of this Bill, The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN said,—Sir, before you put the motion for the committal of this Bill, I beg leave to place on record that I entirely disagree with the recommendation of the Waste Lands Committee in regard to clause 30, relating to the colliery reserve at Westport. I do not think sufficient evidence was adduced by the Committee to justify it in striking out that clause altogether, and I will place the Council in possession of the facts connected with the making of this reserve. In the year 1863-64, when the now Hon. Mr. Richmond was Commissioner of Crown Lands in the Province of Nelson, he marked on the plan of the Town of Westport a certain space—a reserve set aside for a public quay, and for the purpose of the expertation of coal. No further

steps were taken, and therefore the reserve, as such, was not properly legalized as a reserve. But in 1868 this reserve, by proclamation of the then Superintendent of Nelson, was declared to be on the coal fields. In the years 1870, 1871, 1872, and 1873 great floods encroached so far on the then Town of Westport that, after the second year, it was carried away altogether; and in the third year—1873—after the people had partly rebuilt the town, it was carried away to the ocean altogether. After that, the Provincial Council of Nelson carried a resolution to the effect that a portion of this reserve should be withdrawn from the coal fields and set aside for the inhabitants whose property had been swept away by the floods of 1871, 1872, and 1873. This was done, and, on the strength of that, the people began building their houses on this reserve, but never got anything like a title to it, nor even a lease, until after the provinces were done away with. The General Government appointed a Royal Commission to make inquiries as to this reserve; and the Commission took evidence, and recommended, in their report, that the occupiers of land on the reserve should be left in undisturbed possession, and should pay a very moderate rent, and receive a lease of this land.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE .- In what

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN.—In 1878. The Government did not think it right to carry out the whole of the recommendation of the Royal Commission; but they agreed to let these parties occupy the land for twenty-one years, at a rent to be raised every seven years, but did not give them any right as to the improvements they might make. Ever since that time the inhabitants who settled upon this reserve have settled upon about seventeen acres out of an area of seventy-one acres. They have agitated from year to year in order to induce the Go vernment to get compensation provided when the leases of twenty-one years have expired and are to be put up to auction again. This Bill recommends simply that, provided the Government do not want this land for general pur poses—that is to say, for railway or harbour works—the occupiers of this land may be al lowed to keep in possession of the land, at i rent to be determined by the Board; and only in case these leases should go into other hand are they to receive compensation for improve ments. It will be understood that for the first seven years they have to pay, for a small allol ment of 33ft., a rental of £5; and for the las seven years they will have to pay £10 for i But that is scarcely the question. The que tion is, Are we to listen to the just deman as I may call it, of these people, who has on two different occasions lost their all, almost their all?—for anything they saved the spent in putting up houses on this reserve. A we to allow them compensation for improv ments in case they are outbidden at the er of twenty-one years? I may state here tha however the trade of Westport may increaseand they hope it will, and we can scarcel doubt it will, increase—the occupiers of th

Hon. Mr. Bonar



land will in no way interfere with sufficient room for railways or wharf accommodation. They are at a great distance from the wharf and the railway-site. The place where these people live begins at the entrance of the Buller River, and they occupy only a very small space on one side of the street—the whole length occupied does not contain seventeen acres; and, as the reserve is so large, containing fifty-four acres beyond that, it can scarcely be expected that the Government will need the use of this land. I think members of this Council will take into consideration the claim of the people of Westport to retain the right to lease, or, in case they are compelled to give up the land, to get compensation. It is nothing else at present than "Irish landlordism" in its worst form: they have to pay rent and rack-rent, and have no claim for the value of the improvements they have made. The Council was invited last year to do justice to the claims of people who had no right to compensation—people who had occupied Native lands; and I hope honourable members will not find themselves less justified in giving the same privilege to our fellow-men in Westport. I have no connection with the place at all, except that I now and then may be a visitor there, and  $\Gamma$  always hear the complaints of the people, who say they cannot make improvements to their houses for the risk they ran of not getting a shilling of compensation. Therefore I say again I hope and trust that the Council will give these people, who have had such heavy losses to sustain at two or three different periods, a chance now to recover a small portion of what they have lost by heavy floods. All that is asked is that, in case they are compelled to leave, and only in that case, they may get compensation for the improvements made.

Motion agreed to.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 4.—" Land Boards Inquiry Act, 1883," to operate as to previous licenses. Past for-

feitures confirmed.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN moved, That the words, "and shall take effect and be deemed to have taken effect from the day of the declaration of such forfeiture or of the order of such cancellation by the Board," be erased.

The Committee divided on the question, ... That the words stand part of the clause."

AYES, 15.

Fraser Reeves Barnicoat Brett Kohere Reynolds Richmond, J. C. Buckley, G. Lahmann Buckley, P. A. Ngatata Wigley Dignan Wilson. Peacock

Noes, 11.

Pollen Acland Grace Bonar Johnson, G. R. Waterhouse Brandon Williamson. McLean **Campbell** Peter

Majority for, 4.

Words retained.

Clause 30.—Grant of future leases.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE moved, That the clause be struck out.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

AYES, 11.

Barnicoat Campbell Peter Bonar Dignan Lahmann Richmond, J. C. Brett Wigley. Buckley, P. A. McLean

Noes, 6.

Brandon Johnson, G. R. Waterhouse Wilson. Fraser Pollen

Majority for, 5.

Clause retained.

The Council adjourned at seven minutes past ten o'clock p.m.

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Tuesday, 4th November, 1884.

Third Reading—Mangonui-Kaitala Telegraph—Highland Crofters—Adjutant for Southland and Lakes
— Waimate District Court — Canterbury Crown
Lands—Rangitikei Foot-bridge—Rangitikei River
—Grey-Okarito Rosd — Mohaka-Napier Rosd—
Wairoa Resident Magistrate—Clyde Lock-up and
Post and Telegraph Office—Forest-tree-planting
—Invercargili-Bluff Railway Tickets—Creosoting
Works—Cylinder Castings—Waitahuna Petition
—Kawhia School—Addington Workshop Employés—Clareville Platform—Local Government
—Waimate Land Sale—Waimate Mail Service—
"Binder" Twine—Unemployed—Wallsend Coal
Mine—Consolidated Stock Bill—New Zealand
Loan Bill—Armed Constabulary—Supply.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

THIRD READING.

Property-Tax Bill.

MANGONUI-KAITAIA TELEGRAPH.

Mr. HOBBS asked the Commissioner of Telegraphs, Whether the Government will authorize the extension of the telegraph from Mangonui (and leading towards Cape Maria van Diemen lighthouse) to Kaitaia or Te Awanui?

Mr. STÖUT regretted that the expenditure would be so large and the revenue so small that the Government did not see its way to grant the extension asked for.

HIGHLAND CROFTERS.

Mr. HOBBS asked the Government, Whether they will take steps to set aside blocks of land, not exceeding in all 5,000 acres, situated in the Bay of Islands, Hokianga, and Mangonui Districts, for the purpose of special settlements for Highland crofters, on similar terms and conditions to those embodied in section 32, "Waste Lands Act, 1877," and Amendment Act, 1884, and whether they will take action to induce a number of the said crofters to occupy the said blocks?

Mr. BALLANCE was informed that the Bay of Islands would not be a suitable locality for these people, as they required a cold climate. The honourable gentleman should wait until the result of the experiment to be tried in the South Island was ascertained.

#### ADJUTANT FOR SOUTHLAND AND LAKES.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked the Defence Minister, Whether, in accordance with the request of the officers of the various corps of Volunteers in that district, he will appoint a staff adjutant for Southland and the Lakes? The information on the subject was before the Defence Minister, and he had no doubt that that honourable gentleman would admit that a good case had been made out. He hoped, therefore, that the Defence Minister would be able to accede to this request.

Mr. BALLANCE said that, no doubt, as compared with other districts, this particular district was entitled to the services of a staff adjutant; but, on the ground of economy, he did not think it was right to incur any further expense at present. As the additional expense would be considerable, it was proposed to wait for some time before doing anything in the

matter.

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# WAIMATE DISTRICT COURT.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked the Minister of Justice, Whether, seeing that it is not intended to proceed further this session with the Local Courts Bill, he will at once arrange for the holding of monthly sittings of the District Court at Waimate in bankruptcy jurisdiction?

Mr. TOLE replied that arrangements would be made for holding monthly sittings of the District Court at Waimate in bankruptcy juris-

# CANTERBURY CROWN LANDS.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked the Minister of Lands, Whether, his attention having been called to the numerous complaints of delay in the issue of Crown grants in the Canterbury Land District, he will take immediate steps for the remedy of the grievance complained of? Mr. BALLANCE said that some time ago

the attention of the Government was called to this matter, and they found that there were considerable arrears. Since that time steps had been taken to get these arrears reduced, and in a short time the whole would be wiped off.

# RANGITIKEI FOOT-BRIDGE.

Mr. BRUCE asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether he will give directions to provide accommodation for foot-passengers on the railway bridge across the Rangitikei River? He would merely point out that the erection of this bridge would be a great boon to a large number of settlers in the Rangitikei District, who at present from this point had to travel; in order to cross the river, four miles in one direction or seven miles in the other. Minister for Public Works in a previous Govern-

ment had promised this accommodation.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said, with regard to the last remark that had fallen from the honourable gentleman, he found, upon referring to the papers in the department, that the

Mr. Ballance

previous Minister for Public Works had refused this foot-bridge. With regard to the present application, he was afraid the Government could not undertake to erect this foot-bridge; but, if the local authorities liked to do so, the Government would give them every assistance in their power. He would point out that there was at present no approach to this bridge, and, if the track were to be made alongside the railway bridge, the local bodies would have to provide the land, as was done in other similar cases.

Mr. BRUCE explained that he had it on the authority of the honourable member for Forton that such a promise as he had indicated had been made by the Minister for Public Works in the late Government.

Mr. WILSON explained that the promise was of a private nature. There was no official promise made that the foot-bridge would be constructed.

#### RANGITIKEI RIVER.

Mr. BRUCE asked the Government, Whether they would be prepared to assist the local body in attempting, by means of wire fencing, to protect the banks of the Rangitikei River, in order to prevent the destruction of large tracts of valuable land, and improve the navigation of such river? He would point out that this matter was one of considerable importance. When the Rangitikei District was first settled the banks of the river were protected from the encroachments of the water by means of trees and various kinds of shrubs; but from various causes these protections had been removed. The cattle made tracks on the low soft alluvial banks of the river, and thousands of acres of the most fertile land in New Zealand had been swept away and utterly lost to the colony. He might say that the experience of other countries showed that it was very probable that the more the forest lands were cleared the floods would become heavier and more destructive. He thought this was a matter well worthy the consideration of the Government. He had been approached upon this question by a large number of settlers who had become thoroughly alarmed at the continual encroachments of the river. The pilot's house, which was the property of the Govern-ment, was in such a situation that, if steps were not taken in the direction indicated, it would require to be moved.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said, with reference to the pilot's house, it would be the duty of the Government to look after it. The Government were not prepared to give any promise such as that indicated in the question. He would suggest that, if the statements of the honourable member were correct, as he had no doubt they were, a River Board, such as existed in other parts of the colony, should be appointed to conserve the river.

#### GREY-OKARITO ROAD.

Mr. BEVAN asked the Government, Whether they will place a sum of money on the supplementary estimates for the purpose of completing that portion of the main trunk road known as the Grey-Okarito Road, between the lefthand branch of the Rivers Waitaha and Waitangi, in order that settlers may be enabled to obtain their supplies and bring their produce to market overland, and also with a view of opening up about 28,000 acres of some of the best land in the district? He desired to point out that there was a gap of twenty-five or thirty miles of this road left unconnected, and if the road were completed it would be the means of opening up one of the largest tracts of agricultural country in that particular district. The road was only metalled a width of aft. It was merely a horse-track, and of no practical use to the settlers. If the main trunk road were properly formed and metalled, it would form a connecting link to the south of Westland, and would be of incalculable benefit to the whole of that district.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said this matter involved a very large expenditure, and the Government were not prepared at present to undertake it. It would receive consideration

during the recess.

#### MOHAKA-NAPIER ROAD.

Mr. LOCKE asked the Government, Whether they will have the coast bridle-track—the only thoroughfare between Mohaka and Napier—proclaimed a main road under the Roads and Bridges Construction Act, or an alternative line, if a better one can be found, and have the same laid off as a dray-road, to form part of the main trunk line of road between Gisborne and Napier?

Mr. É. RICHARDSON replied that applications had been made from time to time for this road to be gazetted as a main road for the purposes of the Roads and Bridges Construction Act. The applications had not been acceded to, on the ground that an inland road between the two places was already on the schedule of main roads. The Surveyor-General considered that, before proclaiming the coast bridle-track a main road, a further examination of it should be made, to see if it was practicable within a reasonable limit of expense.

#### WAIROA RESIDENT MAGISTRATE.

Mr. LOCKE asked the Government, Whether they will appoint a fixed Resident Magistrate

for the Wairoa District?

Mr. TOLE replied that it was not intended to appoint a fixed Magistrate for the District of Wairoa, as he understood the present Magistrate could without much inconvenience carry out all the business in that particular district. It might be necessary to appoint a competent Clerk and Interpreter, and a sum would be placed on the supplementary estimates for that purpose.

#### CLYDE LOCK-UP AND POST AND TELE-GRAPH OFFICE.

Mr. LOCKE asked the Government, Whether they will place on the supplementary estimates a sufficient sum to build a new lock-up at Clyde, Wairoa, the present building being rotten; also to enlarge the post and telegraph office in the

Mr. Bevan

above township, the present one being totally inadequate for the requirements of the district? He was informed that the lock-up at Clyde was in a rotten state, and wholly unsuited for the safe custody of persons charged with any offence. Such persons had on more than one occasion escaped from the lock-up, which was not at all a difficult thing to do; and the con-stable in charge was obliged, through the leaky state of the building, to hire a house to live in. With reference to the post and telegraph office, he might state that there were a number of young men who had been discharged in different parts of the country, or had on their own account left the department, and who, by standing outside the building on the verandah of any small telegraph office, could understand by the sound what was going on inside. They could ascertain the nature of any messages passing between Wellington and Auckland, and they understood perfectly what was going on in both places. He would give one instance of this. About twelve years ago he was travelling in the Taupo country, and had occasion to stop for the night at a small telegraph office. A confidential message was being forwarded by the then Native Minister, the late Sir Donald McLean, to his colleague in Auckland, in reference to the present Speaker of the House. He heard a comrade of the telegraphist laughing and repeating to himself the message that was going through. Very shortly afterwards he (Mr. Locke) repeated the message to Sir Donald McLean, who was very much surprised indeed, and wondered where he had got the information. Some means ought to be taken to deaden the sound, so that boys discharged from the office, or the public outside, should not be able to know what was going on inside the building. The building at Clyde was one of these small offices referred to.

Mr. BALLANCE replied that the Government recognized the necessity for a new lock-up, and provision would be made for it. Inquiries would be made in respect to the post and telegraph office. The defect referred to by the honourable gentleman was a very bad one. Some means should be adopted to deaden the sound, and there was a vote on the estimates which would enable that to be done.

# FOREST-TREE-PLANTING.

Mr. ROLLESTON asked the Minister of Lands, What course he proposes to take with regard to the outstanding claims under the

Forest-tree-planting Acts?

Mr. BALLANCE replied that there were a large number of outstanding claims with regard to forest plantations. Generally, the Government intended to adhere as far as possible to the regulations—to insist that they should be complied with; but where there were exceptional cases they would receive special consideration at the hands of the Government.

# INVERCARGILL-BLUFF RAILWAY TICKETS.

Wairoa, the present building being rotten; also
Mr. HATCH asked the Minister for Public
to enlarge the post and telegraph office in the
Works, Why the same facilities with regard to

issue of daily return tickets on the Invercargill to Bluff line are not given as on the lines between Dunedin and Port Chalmers and Christ-

church and Lyttelton?

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Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the reason was that the traffic on this line did not compare in any way with that on other port lines, and the expense of instituting such a system would not be recouped to the department.

### CREOSOTING WORKS.

Mr. JOYCE asked the Minister for Public Works, If he will, during the recess, take into consideration the expediency of establishing or subsidizing creosoting works in suitable localities, in order that the timbers of the colony may be used for railway sleepers? been induced to put this question on the Order Paper owing to his having learned, from a paper laid upon the table of the House, that during last year there had been imported into the colony one or two hundred thousand sleepers, at a cost of 5s. each, or, to be absolutely correct, 4s. 11d.—that was, about double the cost of sleepers obtained in this colony. Further, he found it stated, in a communication from Dunedin, that these sleepers were not immediately required. The writer said,-

"The immense quantity of jarrah sleepers stacked up at Dunedin and Port Chalmers is quite surprising, and worthy of the attention of the Assembly. Most of these sleepers have been lying unused for many months, and are supposed to be intended for the Central Railway. I learn, further, that 40,000 jarrah sleepers have been let for the Catlin's River line, although this branch was especially intended to keep up the supply of timber, the district having been recommended for totara and matai. The exhaustion of the funds pro-vided for these railways may be partly accounted for by these importations, which are at present dead stock, because the lines they are intended for are not yet formed. Had the Atkinson Government spent the same amount of money upon the railway formations and other labour within the colony that has been devoted to the importation of jarrah sleepers, it would have been better applied, and the depression might have been less severely felt.

It had been suggested, with regard to the second part of the question, that creosoting might be carried on at the several gasworks in the large towns of the colony, the substances used being produced at these places. From papers in his possession, to which he would not refer at length, it appeared that the latest processes discovered were far less expensive than those formerly in use. For instance, it was now stated that it was not absolutely necessary to use carbolic acid. He need not say that the timbers in this colony, although not very durable unless creosoted, were admirably suitable for the purpose of creosoting; and he should be glad to receive an assurance from the Minister for Public Works that, at any rate, no more money would be sent out of the colony for that which could be as well produced in it.

Mr. Hatch

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that generally it was the intention of the Government not to call for tenders for the supply of sleepers from outside the colony. With regard to the second part of the question, the Government had resolved to call for tenders again for the supply of creosoted sleepers, but on somewhat different terms from those imposed before, and he hoped by this means to see the industry established. The honourable gentleman, however, was hardly correct in saying that the material required for creosoting was produced at gasworks, because there had first to be a process set up for the distillation of the article required.

Cylinder Castings.

# CYLINDER CASTINGS.

Mr. LEVESTAM asked the Minister for Public Works, If the cylinder castings required for the Wellington-Napier contract are of such great urgency, why did not the department call for tenders at an earlier date, so as to avoid inconvenience in the event of an eligible tender not being offered in the colony? This question was the outcome of a reply which he had received to another question that he had put on the Order Paper, when he had learned that modifications could not be made in the specifications for these cylinder castings, because of the urgency of the work. He had asked whether the honourable gentleman would not reduce the penalty, but he said he could not do it, owing to the urgency of the work. Then, he asked, without notice, whether, in the event of it proving impossible to get the tender executed in the colony in the time fixed, the honourable gentleman would be able to get the castings from England in the same time. The reply was that the question was absurd, and that he (Mr. Levestam) knew it to be ridiculous. But he could not help thinking that it was far more ridiculous to leave a matter of such urgency to within eight weeks of the time when the article would be actually required, when a local manufacturer could not be expected to be able to do

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that the reason he said the question was an absurd one was, that he had already stated in a former reply that he had directed the time to be extended from eight to sixteen weeks, and he saw no reason to alter his opinion.

# WAITAHUNA PETITION.

Mr. BROWN asked the Minister of Lands, What steps, if any, he will take towards giving effect to the prayer of petitioners at Waitshuna West, reported on by the Waste Lands Committee in August, 1882; also by the Otago Alleged Evasions of the Land Act Committee in August, 1883, recommending Government to institute inquiries at as near as possible to the locality where the petitioners reside? It was the intention of the Waste Lands Board of Otago to hold this inquiry, and they requested the petitioners—of whom there were a large number—to come down to Dunedin and give evidence; but it was very inconscient for a large number of persons to 50 venient for a large number of persons to go

down and perhaps be kept waiting there a week, and if one or more Commissioners were sent up to the district it would answer the purpose better, for they could get all the evidence

available in two or three days.

Mr. BALLANCE said that the matter referred to in the question was before the Waste Lands Board, and he did not despair of the Board being able to arrive at some conclusion. If, however, the Board could not do so, the expediency of appointing a Commission would be considered by the Government.

# KAWHIA SCHOOL.

Mr. BROWN asked the Minister of Educa-tion, If the Government intend taking any steps to establish a school at Kawhia for the education of Maori and European children? It would be within the recollection of the House that about a month ago a number of members, of whom he was one, went in the "Hinemoa" to Kawhia. They certainly had the elements against them for the first fifteen or sixteen hours, but, nevertheless, the trip was enjoyable, and they reached Kawhia on a very fine Sabbath morning. All were very much interested in what they saw, not only in the fine harbour, but in the character of the land, and everything indicated that some day there would be a large population located there. But what surprised them when they got there was that there was no church and no minister, they naturally being desirous of attending a place of worship, especially as they understood that there had been a mission established there years ago. They also found that there was no school, and, as this was sure to be an important place some day, he thought it very desirable, in the interests of the future, that the children should receive some education.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN rose to a point of order. The same question had been asked by the member for Sydenham a fortnight ago, and a reply given. Was it in order for the honourable gentleman to take up the time of the House by asking the same question again?

Mr. SPEAKER was not prepared to rule the honourable member out of order in putting a question upon such an important subject.

Mr. BROWN said that undoubtedly it was a matter of great importance, as in all probability there would be a large population settled in that very interesting locality, and it was only right that the question should be put a

second time. Mr. STOUT said he was not able to give any further information than he had given on the 2nd October in answering the honourable mem-So far as the European ber for Stanmore. children were concerned, their education was a matter for the Auckland Board to undertake. The Government were, however, anxious to establish a Native school there, and possibly for some time it might do for children of both

ADDINGTON WORKSHOP EMPLOYÉS.

Cowley, Robert James McAlier, Henry McAlister, Charles Mahoney, Patrick McDonnell, and others were discharged from the Addington workshops on the 25th October last, while the services of men who had been a much shorter time in the Government employment have been retained? It would be within the recollection of the Minister for Public Works that some twenty-seven mechanics had been discharged from the Addington Workshops; and some of these men had interviewed him (Mr. Holmes) in Christchurch, and had desired to know why they were discharged, seeing that they were men who had been a considerable time in the service, and were thoroughly efficient, their ages ranging from twenty-nine years to forty-one years. He had received some information from the department to the effect that they were discharged because the department required to discharge some hands, and these were men who had entered the service lately, and were not considered efficient hands. But one of these men-Cowley-had been in the service twenty-one years, and before he entered the service was employed by the Minister for Public Works himself, when he was constructing the Christchurch-Lyttelton Railway. Another of the men-McAlier-had been ten years in the service, another seven years, another nine years, another three years, and so on. To him (Mr. Holmes) the men appeared active, intelligent, and respectable-looking, and apparently were strong and vigorous. He held in his hand testimonials from the department, giving all of the men the highest character for good conduct and efficiency. Yet, in the face of that, they had been discharged, whilst, as the men said, others inexperienced, not half as active as those discharged, had been retained in the service. He put this question so as, if possible, to induce the Minister to do that which he had unsuccessfully endeavoured to get his predecessor to do-to appoint a local Board to make inquiries into matters of this kind, so that the House might be satisfied whether such statements were true or not. If they were true, of course some person who had responsi-bility in connection with the department ought to be summarily dismissed: if they were not true, such an inquiry would prevent such statements being recklessly made in the future.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that, if the

statements made by the honourable member were correct—and he did not mean to say they were not — there could be no question that there was a case for inquiry. He had, since notice of the question had been given, sent a direct message by wire, making two inquiries, one being as to whether the statement was correct as to the time of service of these men. and another as to whether their fitness for the positions in which they were employed was considered. He received an answer that the statement as to the time these men had been employed given by him in reply to the honourable member for Stanmore was practically correct, and that it was absolutely correct that Mr. HOLMES asked the Minister for Pub-ic Works, To inform the House why Joseph the interests of the public service as to the fitness of the men discharged. The honourable member would see that, if the men's statements were correct, there was certainly a case for further inquiry.

# CLAREVILLE PLATFORM.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether he will cause a dangerous excavation at the back of Clareville Wayside Platform, on the Masterton Railwayline, to be either fenced off or filled in? This excavation was made in constructing the line, before the site for the wayside station was fixed. There was no protection whatever for fixed. There was no protection whatever for the public, and in winter especially, there being no lights, it was really a very dangerous place. The cost involved was very small.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that some

complaint about this spot was made previously to the department, and it had been reported upon as not necessitating any attention, because it was 8ft. or 10ft. away from the ordinary footpath. But, as the honourable member said it was a source of danger, and the cost was so trifling, he would have something

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.
Mr. GARRICK asked the Government, If they will, before the next sitting of Parliament, furnish members with copies of any Bills proposed to be introduced providing for local selfgovernment, any Bills affecting the administration of the estates of deceased persons, or regulating or affecting the alienation of land? The questions that such Bills would deal with were of such vital importance that he thought, if it could be done without inconvenience to the Government, it was very desirable that honourable members should be given an opportunity of seeing those measures before Parliament met.

Mr. STOUT said it would always be the object of the Government to place as soon as possible before the country, and especially be-fore members of both Houses, the programme they wished to see adopted in reference to local government and other measures. But an important subject like that would take a considerable time to mature, and the Government would not give any pledges they might not be able to fulfil. Therefore they could not pledge themselves that they would furnish the Bills to honourable members before Parliament was again called together. However, if the measures were in such a state as to be ready to be printed before the meeting of Parliament, they would endeavour to comply with the honourable member's request.

# WAIMATE LAND SALE.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked the Minister of Lands, If he will direct that the sale of Section 35567, County of Waimate, now advertised to be held at Christchurch on the 7th January next, shall be postponed, so that the said land may be submitted at the sale of sections at Redcliffe and Waitaki North, which is to take place at Waimate in the month of March? If

Mr. E. Richardson

the land were sold locally, it would in all probability bring a higher price than if sold at-

such a distant place as Christchurch.

Mr. BALLANCE replied that instructions had already been given to the Commissioner of Crown Lands to have the land sold at Waimate in March.

# WAIMATE MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked the Postmaster-General, What was the amount of the lowest tender received for the bi-weekly mail service between Waimate and Waihao Forks, Redcliffe, Upper Ferry, and Hakateramea; the name of the tenderer; why such lowest tender was not accepted; and what arrangements are in contemplation with reference to the said mail service?

Sir J. VOGEL replied that he did not think it desirable to disclose the name of the lowest tenderer, or the amount at which he tendered. inasmuch as the department had determined to call for fresh tenders. Apart from the question of price, fresh tenders had to be called, because it was necessary to rearrange the service, owing to the settlers interested not continuing their contribution of one-half, and from the fact that it seemed useless to continue to include Redcliffe directly in any service, as the revenue of that office only amounted to about £3 per annum. It was proposed to serve Upper Ferry and Hakateramea from Kurow, and Waihao Forks by a short service connecting with the Waimate Company's Railway; and it was proposed to close the office and abolish the existing service from Waimate.

# "BINDER" TWINE.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN asked the Commissioner of Customs, Whether he has seen a letter in the Lyttelton Times, of the 31st October, signed by the Secretary of the Cooperative Association in Christchurch, stating that the invoice price of the "binder" twine manufactured by the Auckland Fibre Company, delivered to the Association to sell again, is 101d. per pound net, which, he states, means 11d. to 1s. per pound to the farmer; while the price of the imported twine is 7d. per pound delivered to the farmer? He wished to direct the attention of the Premier once more to this important subject, with the view of inducing him to withdraw the circular issued to the Customhouse officers directing them to charge duty on imported twine. It was desirable that this should be done, in order that all twine that came in this season might escape duty. If it were levied after the 1st January that would not be the case, so far as a large number of small farmers were concerned.

Mr. STOUT had not had time to read the letter to which the question referred, but he was informed by the Auckland Fibre Company that the statement in the letter, as quoted by the honourable gentleman, was inaccurate. The Fibre Company had never sold any twine to the Association in Christchurch; and their price last year was 91d. per pound, subject to.

10 per cent. discount, and the price this year The honourable member asked was lower. the Government to withdraw a circular imposing a duty. That was hardly a fair way to put it. The duty was imposed by statute, and they were simply administering the law. If this were the only thing requiring revision in the tariff, the Government might have introduced a special Act to deal with it; but they had been obliged to refuse at least fifty applications for revision of the tariff from all quarters - from importers on the one hand, and from manufacturers on the other. attempted to deal with the tariff in one item, he apprehended the House would not like that, but would like to see the whole tariff revised. They had not time to do that. What they had done was to stretch the law in the interests of farmers to such an extent that he hoped they would not be blamed for taking the course they proposed taking -- to extend the time until the 1st January. He had always stated that, if there were cargoes on the way, they would not impose duty on them, even after the 1st January. That would give farmers every opportunity of getting their twine imported free of duty

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN said the injustice that would be inflicted was this: Those who had ordered twine before they heard anything of the duty being imposed would get it duty-free, while others would have to pay the duty. It was very unfair that a certain number of farmers should have to pay duty, while others

did not.

Mr. STOUT pointed out that the small farmers might order their twine now.

# UNEMPLOYED.

Mr. SHRIMSKI wished to ask the Minister for Public Works a question without notice. Some time ago he presented a petition on behalf of the Oamaru unemployed, in which they set forth the manner in which they were treated. They were supposed to be earning 4s. 6d. a day, whereas they did nothing of the kind. They were taken out of town into the country, and, as they had to keep their families in town, their wages were insufficient to keep them. To-day he had received a telegram in which they complained that the wages given to the Christchurch unemployed were 5s. a day, while the Oamaru unemployed only received 3s. 6d. a day. He wished to know if that was the case.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that the price fixed for the work which had been offered to those men in the neighbourhood of Oamaru was such that men inclined to do a fair day's work could earn at least 4s. 6d. a day. The rate paid to men employed at Christchurch was 4s. 6d. Some men who had been sent up country to road-work a hundred miles from Christchurch had been allowed an extra 6d. per day on account of the extra distance.

#### WALLSEND COAL MINE.

Mr. GUINNESS wished to ask the Government a question, without notice, on a matter of

urgency. He had just received a telegram containing certain resolutions passed unanimously at a public meeting held at Wallsend last night. The telegram was as follows:—

"Greymouth, 4th November, 1884.

"At a public meeting held at Wallsend the following resolutions were carried unanimously: (1.) 'This meeting views with regret and indignation the sale of the Wallsend Township to the Westport Colliery Company, the said sale being contrary to the conditions of lease, and a very great wrong to the residents of this district.' (2.) 'That the Government be requested to reconsider their decision in reference to non-interference with the sale, or that such conditions be attached to same as will give to the residents the right to purchase the surface at a fair price.'"

When he called the attention of the Minister of Mines to this question, the Minister said there were conditions attached to the sale, and that one of them was to the effect that the residents should have a right to leases of their holdings at a rental of £2 10s. per annum. He (Mr. Guinness) had looked through the documents on the table, and he failed to see how such conditions could have been attached or have binding force or effect. He would ask the Government whether they would facilitate the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the whole transaction. If a Committee were appointed, the late Minister of Mines would be able to show fully the facts and reasons that actuated him in consenting to the sale.

Mr. BALLANCE replied that, as this was a matter of some importance, he would ask the honourable gentleman to give notice of the question.

#### CONSOLIDATED STOCK BILL.

On the motion for going into Committee on this Bill,

Mr. MOSS said, - Before going into Committee I wish to say a few words with reference to some amendments of which I have given notice. I voted for the second reading of this Bill, but said at the time that there was one portion of it particularly objectionable; and the amendments of which I have given notice are to raise the question whether it is right to make fictitious payments into the Sinking Fund. Honourable members who have not looked into the Bill will excuse me for pointing out that it involves a very large ques-It proposes to deal, in round numbers, with £20,000,000 of our debentures. £20,000,000, about one-half is without sinking fund and the other half has a sinking fund. It is in the latter half, I presume, that the Treasurer is more immediately interested. The point on which I would lay stress is this: that the conversion of some £13,000,000 which have been previously converted was a very slow The Act authorizing consolidation and conversion was passed in 1877, and it is now 1884, and I do not think there are £13,000,000 converted. We are asked now to convert an ad-

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It will take a very long ditional £20,000,000. period, no doubt, and during that period it is proposed to pay £250,000 the first year, and an annually-increasing sum, into the Sinking Fund in debentures instead of in cash. That is a fictitious payment, and, instead of reducing the debt, it is increasing it yearly, and in anything but an open, fair, and straightforward manner. Now, the gentlemen who are holding these debentures are receiving a high rate of interest, and if we allow it to be said for one moment that we are not converting them fairly there will be very great difficulty in converting them at all. Then, I would call attention to the fact that we are concerned with a very powerful body in dealing with these debentures. I refer to the Bank of England, without whose assistance we have it on record that we should have had great difficulty in respect to the last five-million loan. I think, before passing such a Bill as this, we should have consulted the Bank of England. Supposing that this Bill is passed, and the bank should object to the proceeding as not fair, regular, or in accordance with what is done by other countries, we should find our credit very much injured. again, the Imperial Government have a right to be consulted, seeing that they have guaranteed a million and a half of our debentures, a million of which carries a sinking fund still. The question that I propose to raise will be raised on the first amendment on the Order Paper. If that is carried, it will be necessary to proceed with the others; but, if it falls through, the others need not be put. I ask the House to consider seriously what we are doing in passing this measure. Let us picture to ourselves the position of this stock, handled, as it will be, on the one hand by the "bulls," and on the other by the "bears." The "bulls," anxious to run the price of the stock up, will point to the fact that we are reducing the property-tax and not imposing any fresh taxation. Being desirous to sell their debentures they will say, "How flourishing that country must be, seeing that it can get on so well without additional taxation!" On the other side, we shall have those who are anxious to depreciate our debentures. They will point and we shall give them a colourable pretext for doing so—to this fictitious system of payment into the Sinking Fund. They will say that we are virtually breaking our engagements with the bondholders with whom we entered into agreements years ago, and that we are so pushed that, not content with making fictitious payments into the Sinking Fund, we are obliged to seize the yearly interest earned by past accumulations of that fund and replace it with these new debentures. Some speak of doing away with a sinking fund as if it were a new idea: but it is fifteen years since our debentures were issued without sinking fund. What I fear is that it will be looked upon as a breach of faith with the older bondholders. I fear also that among our own people we shall be creating a false impression as to our present position. This false impression is likely to draw us into a fools' paradise, and to cause us to

Mr. Moss

Consolidated

throw aside all ideas of prudence and economy in the administration of the country.

Sir J. VOGEL. — Without raising a fresh debate upon the Bill, I may say that I find it difficult to understand the meaning of the amendments proposed by the honourable gentle-On the other hand, I have given notice of amendments in the direction pointed out by the honourable member for Egmont-namely, taking the power from the Colonial Treasurer and giving it to the Governor in Council, in all respects in which it will be convenient so to do. I have also given notice of two other clauses, which it will not be necessary to refer to now, as they will have to be considered in Committee.

Bill committed.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 5.—Annual increases of Sinking Fund to be computed.

The Committee divided on the question, "That this clause stand part of the Bill."

AYES, 38. Ballance Lance Shrimski Buckland, J. C. Larnach Smith Cadman Stewart, W. D. Macandrew Mackenzie, M. Stout Cowan Duncan McKenzie, J. Sutter Fraser Newman Tajaroa Gillies . O'Callaghan Thompson, T. Tole Grigg Pearson Turnbull Pyke Guinness Harper Reese Vogel. Tellers. Hatch Richardson, E. O'Conor Holmes Ross Shephard Walker. Joyce Noes, 6.

Tellers. Lake Montgomery Barron Thomson, J. W. Moss. Trimble.

PAIRS. Against. For. Brown Wilson Whyte, J. B. Bevan Coster Beetham Fitzherbert Mitchelson Hurst, W. J. Gore Buckland, W. F. Morris Samuel Conolly ·Steward, W. J. Wakefield.

Majority for, 32.

Clause retained. Bill reported, with amendments, and read a third time.

# NEW ZEALAND LOAN BILL.

On the motion, That this Bill be committed, Mr. HOLMES said,—I wish to take this opportunity of saying a few words in reference to the first item in the schedule—£30,000 for immigration. When the Loan Bill of 1882 was brought down, proposing to expend £200,000 on immigration, several honourable members, including myself, strenuously opposed it; and we did our utmost subsequently, in Committee, to have it thrown out. We pointed out that there was then in the country much labour that was

not employed, and that, if we would persist in borrowing, or spending money out of the con-solidated revenue, for the purpose of bringing in free immigrants, and those people subsequently became destitute or were unable to find employment, the cry would be, as it has been, that, as long as the public money was expended to bring in one class of labour to compete with the same class of labour already here, so long would those people be justified in coming to the Government and saying, "We are unable to find work. You have induced us to come out under false pretences, and it is your bounden duty, now we are here, to find work for us at the current rate of wages." What we prognosticated proved absolutely true. Each year since 1882, especially in the agricultural districts of the colony, we have had large meetings of the unemployed. We have had them using over and over again the very same arguments that I have already described—arguments which, I maintain, are absolutely logical. What is the result? Year after year considerable sums of public money are squandered in useless works, because it is a notorious fact that most of the money now spent in finding work for these men is spent on works that are absolutely of little or no utility to the country. On the same grounds, I now oppose this vote. If at the present time there were a demand for labour in the country, I should raise no opposition; but, seeing that during the last three or four months we have had outcries all over the country from those called the unemployed, it seems to me a most illogical, outrageously foolish, and absurd thing for any persons, calling themselves thoughtful men and legislators, to propose to borrow money in order to bring more labour into the country, when already we have confessed, by our own action, that we have more labour in the country than we can properly employ. Unless some explanation is given by the Government that will remove the insuperable difficulty in the way of honestly and fairly voting this sum of £30,000, I shall vote against that portion of the schedule, and force it to a division.

Mr. GUINNESS.—There is one point in this Bill I shall take exception to in Committee. That is the way in which the amounts are put down in the schedule. There is a lump sum of £700,000 for railways. I do not think we have had any full explanation as to what railways the Government intend to construct out of that amount. The Public Works Statement is simply a statement read out to the House by the Minister for the time being, and, if that honourable gentleman should resign his seat in the Ministry, or take another portfolio, I do not think it could be said that because he made that Statement another Minister stepping into his shoes would be bound by it. I should prefer to see the railways scheduled in the Act, so that we may have some guarantee that the amount to be borrowed will be spent on the particular lines for which we are asking authority to borrow money. Although agreeing with the Bill in every other respect, I shall try to get an amendment made in the direction of

having it specifically stated in the schedule on what railways it is intended to expend this large sum of £700,000.

Mr. GRIGG.—The honourable member for Christchurch South objects to the vote for immigration on account of the amount of labour which is already here; but he forgets that we are going to spend a large amount of money on public works, and that we shall want labour to render the spending of that. money profitable. My only objection to the Public Works Statement was that such a large amount of work was to be done, and that there was no provision for an extra supply of labour to do it. The honourable gentleman says it is perfectly illogical to bring out additional labour; but I say it is much more illogical tospend two or three millions a year on public works without making any provision for an additional number of labourers. He draws He draws. attention to the number of unemployed in the country; but I see that a question was asked the other day as to the number of unemployed in Auckland, and the answer was that there were only twenty-two; and yet we are going to spend a million of money on a railway between Auckland and Wellington. The effect would be that contractors would estimate accord-ingly, and that we should have to accept tenders at a rate of 20 or 25 per cent. higherthan we should if the Government made prudent provision for the introduction of a number of labourers. I do not mean to say that it should be such a number as would affect. the present price of labour; I believe that the price of labour at present is fair: but I think additional labour will be required, if we aregoing to spend such large sums of borrowed money. I may say that I think £30,000 is an inadequate provision, and that when tenders. come to be opened it will be found by the Minister for Public Works that they will be so high that some provision will have to be made for immigration.

Dr. NEWMAN.—I think we might refer the honourable gentleman who has raised an objection to this amount being too large to the Public Works Statement, where he would find that this £30,000 is required to bring out people who have been suffering great hardship under the nomination system of immigration, through not being able to get passages to the colony. I certainly agree with the honourable member for Christchurch South that, in the present state of the labour market in the colony, we should not bring out any large number of labourers.

Mr. ROSS.—I think that the provision here made for immigration is not too large, as the balance left after paying the assisted passages of nominated immigrants will not be more than sufficient to bring out the female domestic servants who are so much required.

Sir G. GREY.—I wish to state that I shall assist the honourable member for Christchurch South in his efforts to get this amount struck out. It is very unjust to the labouring-classes of the colony, for it is they who have to pay for these loans. I believe we should do much

better if we followed the example of the United States, which never vote money to bring labour into the country. We should in that way improve the colony greatly, because a large number of persons would come from the Australian ·Colonies and from Great Britain, who would pay their own passages, and we should have a race of colonists of the highest order in this country, while we should not be injuring the people at large, as we shall be doing if we vote this money.

New Zealand

Sir J. VOGEL.—I merely wish to remark that, of the £30,000 in the schedule of this Bill, £17,000 is for liabilities. I think it has already been explained to the House that there were a great number of persons nominated by friends here, who in some cases sold their pos-sessions and in others gave up situations to come out; and they have suffered great hardships through not being able to do so. is therefore a moral, if not a legal, obligation on the Government to give these persons passages; and the Government, after considera-tion, feel themselves bound to carry out these nominations, and that will absorb £17,000 of this sum. There, then, only remains £13,000; and that is only a small amount, if we consider the time which must elapse between now and when this money becomes operative, some eighteen months hence. It will be desirable to bring out single females; and we are to a certain extent bound to carry out the resolu-tion which was passed by this House, and em-bodied in a Bill which is now before the other House, in reference to the bringing-out of Highland crofters. The Government propose to bring out some half-dozen or less representative men of this class, who will come here and see whether they will be disposed to establish settlements under the terms and conditions prescribed by the clause inserted in the Land Therefore it must not be considered by the honourable member for Christchurch South that this £30,000 represents the immigration policy of the Government. I may, however, point out that this is the first large Loan Bill in which so small a sum has been provided for immigration. I am bound to say that I think it is a matter for regret that we are not able, consistently with our duty to the colony, to put down a larger sum. Still, considering the present state of the labour market, I agree with my honourable colleague the member for Christchurch South that it is not expedient to bring out immigrants at the cost of the colony. At the same time, I look forward to a period when, the colony having arrived at a condition of renewed prosperity, we shall again pursue that policy of immigration which, over a course of many years, in most of the provinces has assisted in bringing to the colony a large number of valuable settlers, who have established comfortable homes for themselves and their families, and who have become exceedingly prosperous colonists. At the present time we are not proposing a policy of immigration; but I look upon it that, if the immigration is considered fairly, it is almost a barometer of the condition of the colony:

that is to say that, at such times as it is expedient to bring out immigrants, we may consider that the colony is in the full tide of prosperity; while, if it is not expedient to bring them, we may come to the conclusion that the colony is not as prosperous as it ought to be. The explanation of this social barometer is very clear. It must be apparent to honourable members that we have prepared the colony to be the home of a very much larger population than at present inhabit it, and when we have the aid of a largely-increased population we shall be in that condition of prosperity which ought to be normal in a noble colony like this. But there are other questions to be considered; and it is expedient to go narrowly into the question of immigration at present, for we cannot tell the operation of these direct steamers. They may in the future, even if the colony is in want of labour and settlers, release us of a great deal of responsibility by bringing out immigrants who will pay their own passages, and it may also be the case that the largely-increased communication between Australia and New Zealand will bring us population, without our having to go to the expense of bringing out immigrants. Therefore my remarks must be taken as purely theoretical, and not as indicating any intention on the part of the Government to come down with any specific proposals in relation to immigration. For the rest, I may say that the amount here put down is the smallest that has ever appeared in any similar Loan Bill, and the £13,000 which will be left may be used in bringing out a class of immigrants to whom I am sure the honourable member for Christchurch South is too gallant to take any exception—that is, single women.

Mr. HOLMES .-- I am already a married man, and bigamy is not allowed.

Bill committed.

Harper

#### IN COMMITTEE.

Schedule. Mr. HOLMES moved the omission of the item, "Immigration, £30,000."

The Committee divided on the question, "That the item be retained."

AYES, 51. Atkinson Hatch Rolleston Hirst, H. Ballance Ross B.-Bradshaw Hobbs Samuel Steward, W. J. Brown Joyce Lake Stewart, W. D. Bruce Lance Bryce Stout Buchanan Locke Sutter Cowan Macandrew Thompson, T. Thomson, J.W. Dargaville Macarthur McKenzie, J. Tole Dodson McMillan Trimble Fergus Fraser Moat Vogel O'Callaghan Walker Fulton Garrick O'Conor Wilson.Tellers. Gillies Pearson Reese Fitzherbert Grey Grigg Richardson, E. Peacock.

Sir G. Grey

NoEs, 12.

Allwright Barron Guinness Levestam Menteath Montgomery Moss Tellers.
Newman Holmes
Shrimski White, W.

Majority for, 89.

Amendment negatived.

Bill reported, with amendments. On the question, That the amendments be

agreed to.

Mr. ROLLESTON said, - Since the House went into Committee on this Bill, I have taken the opportunity to refresh my memory on the amount put down for immigration, and I think I shall be pardoned for just stating what the real position of the case is, as I understand it. There is no doubt that there has been an impression abroad that, with regard to nominated immigration, proper care has not been taken to advise the immigrants—those nominating their friends, and those who were nominated at Home—as to not breaking up their homes until such time as Parliament had an opportunity of considering the vote. Well, Sir, as I have said, instructions were given to the various Immigration Officers. In January last the Immigration Officers were instructed in these terms — page 7, D.-2, Appendix of last ses-

"Inform nominators that Government cannot pledge itself as to the time when passages will be provided, and they should warn their friends whom they nominate not to take any action to break up their homes until definitely advised to do so by the Agent-General."

Subsequently, in the month of March, instructions were given to the Agent-General to stop all immigration, except for nominated single women. I may say that between the months of January, 1882, and December, 1883, there were not more than about 196 nominated men, and the majority of the immigrants during the last two years have been single women. Therefore any excess that is found to exist has not been a consequence of over-immigration; and the importation of single women has not interfered with the labour market. I was glad to hear the Colonial Treasurer admit that any difficulties that had arisen were those naturally incident to the inability of people at Home to understand the instructions that were given to them not to break up their homes, and that they were led on by hope and excitement to take action they were not justified in taking, after the instructions that had been given and the notice that was put upon every application by the direction of the department here. The instructions were,-

"For the future, nominations can only be received with condition, to be noted in each application, that it will not be acted on during the winter months, and not even afterwards unless Parliament approves of further immigration."

It is clear, as will be seen from the state of the accounts, that it was impossible that the Government should go on, without the consent

of Parliament, receiving applications which would sooner or later end in a larger appro-priation being necessary; and therefore very distinct instructions had to be given—which, at any rate, made the blame, if any, fall upon the people themselves if they went in excess of what they were given to expect. With regard to the sum which is upon the schedule to this loan, it appears to me to be in excess of what the Treasurer stated was necessary for liabilities. By referring to Table 7 of the Financial Statement, which was made by the late Colonial Treasurer, it will be seen that there was £35,000 balance available in March — at the end of March, 1884-and that there were liabilities then to the extent of £51,000, making a total of £87,000. If you add £30,000, the sum now on this schedule, you will get £117,000. Take £51,000 of liabilities from that, and the £11,000 which appears in the Public Works Statement as the liabilities at the end of August, and it will be seen that some £55,000 remains, which, if this Bill passes, will now be available for the purposes of immigration, if the House votes it. I was glad to see that the Colonial Treasurer acquitted the Agent-General's Department and the department here of blame in the matter, inasmuch as the difficulty has arisen partly from the late sitting of Parliament, and the fact that a number of people had made applications which could not be entertained until Parliament had determined whether it would give further means to carry on nominated immigration. Speaking generally on this question of immigration, I should not like it to be thought that I entertain the view that the sum proposed is at all adequate to the amount of borrowed money that is going to be spent in accordance with the appropriations, direct and indirect, that are proposed for borrowed money by this House. For a number of years I have always consistently held the view that immigration is the lifeblood of the country, and that to borrow money in large sums and spend it without at the same time maintaining a proper adjustment of land and labour with the introduction of money is a fatal mistake in a new country. It seems to me that the policy of borrowing such as that we have largely entered upon this session, directly and indirectly, is one which must interfere very considerably with the productions of the country. Now, if there is one thing that we want more than another at the present time it is the increase of our exports and the increase of our producing powers. The large sums of money spent on harbour works, railways, and other great undertakings that do not immediately increase production will not have the effect, as I believe, of increasing the prosperity of the country. I should like to say a word also with regard to immigration. The returns which have been laid on the table show very distinctly, so far as the unemployed are concerned, that a very large number of unemployed at the present time are men who came here some years ago-men who did not come under the nomination system, and who, rather unfortunately, have turned out but little suited

to the main industries of the country. That is really the history of a large number of the unemployed at the present time. The returns showed that particularly in the Province of Canterbury. I do not wish to enter into a discussion upon this Bill. I need not say that I do not agree with the borrowing proposals generally of the colony. I take, for instance, the appropriation here of borrowed money for the erection of wooden buildings. I think that is a very great mistake. It is a very great mistake to remit £150,000 of property-tax and at the same time to borrow money for putting up wooden buildings. That might properly be done out of taxation. Sooner or later we shall have to come to that. That would bring us face to face with what is really wanted. should not be so extravagant if we had to provide the money out of taxation. I have made these remarks in regard to the immigration question because expressions had been used which might have been taken to imply, if not for the words uttered by the Colonial Treasurer, that there had been a certain amount of harshness—"cruelty," I think, was the word used—on the part of the department in regard to immigration. I was glad to hear the Treasurer admit that such was not the case.

Mr. MOSS.-I have voted against this portion of the Bill, and have taken every opportunity since I have been in this House to speak against the system of immigration that has been pursued. We stand alone among the Australasian Colonies in borrowing large sums of money to bring immigrants to our shores. Reference has been made to Victoria, and I know, at all events so far as that colony is concerned, that they have not borrowed one farthing for the purpose of introducing immigrants since it has been a colony; and, moreover, that they have not spent as much altogether since the foundation of the colony in introducing immigrants as we have spent out of loans since 1870, to say nothing of what was spent by the Provincial Governments before. That is, to my mind, a remarkable fact. I cannot see the great advantage in immigra-tion, as we have been conducting it, which is claimed for it by some of its advocates. I think that it simply overcharges one rank of the population, and tends to overcrowd the labour market. I have not been able to see how you can go on introducing immigrants, and spending large sums of money in doing so, without overcrowding the labour market of the colony. In the early days of the colony that might have been avoidable, because then lands were easily obtained, and labourers, having saved a certain amount of money, could always relieve the labour market by purchasing land and settling upon it. But that is no longer the case. It is no longer possible for men so easily to relieve the labour market by becoming settlers themselves; and, holding that opinion, I have always persistently and strongly opposed the view that has been assented to in Parliament in passing votes for immigration; and I oppose it now.

Mr. W. D. STEWART.—I simply wish to

Mr. Rolleston

say that I think one object should be kept in. view, and that is, to avoid as far as possible the constant changes which occur in the system of bringing people out. I remember one case which may be regarded as an instance. A man came out to the colony under the nomination As soon as he came out and got employment, he wanted to send Home for his. family under the nomination system; but when he applied he found that the system had been changed. He could not afford to get out his family in the ordinary way, he could not go Home himself, and therefore he was out here in a species of imprisonment. I brought the matter under the attention of the Minister for Immigration—the honourable member for Geraldine—at the time; but no redress could be obtained. It is all very well to send instructions Home to the Agent-General; but the point. is this: that a system has been advertised in. the papers; people get the papers and read the advertisements, and have no knowledge that changes take place from time to time. Probably in a fortnight or three weeks some entirely different instructions are sent Home, and these instructions are not seen by the people who have read of a particular system being in operation, and the result is that they are deceived. I venture to say that this frequent change of system has produced an enormous amount of injustice, and has tended perhaps more than anything else to drive immigrants to Canada and the United States. I venture to hope that the Immigration Department will lay down some sort of policy, which will be adhered to for some length of time.

Mr. SHRIMSKI.—The honourable member-for Geraldine says that some portion of the loan ought to be expended in promoting immigration, and that the colony cannot progress. unless we get more population; but my opinion is that, if we expend our money on proper and profitable works, we shall find plenty of people anxious to come to the colony without our paying their passages. We saw an illustration of that in the large number of persons who left our shores to go to New South Wales when work was plentiful there. The Government of that colony did not pay a single penny for their passages. They went there for the purpose of getting work; and so, we may depend, it will be here. If we enable men to get work we shall soon gain population. And another thing is that we shall get a better class of men. We have had immigrants coming into this country who, as the honourable member himself said, have become a burden to us, and therefore we should avoid bringing any more of this class in. Provide work for men and you will get the right sort, who will be a benefit and a boon to the country. Therefore I think the action taken by the Government is proper and right.

Mr. STOUT.—I think it is inadvisable that

we should have a discussion on immigration on this Loan Bill. When the immigration estimates are before the House will be the proper time for considering whether any money shall be voted for immigration or not. It has been

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pointed out in Committee that the greater part of this money is being borrowed to meet what may be termed past obligations. It is not asked for in order to carry on any great system of immigration. There has never before been a Loan Bill passed in this House in which such a small proportion has been allocated to immigration. Of the Three-Million Loan there was £200,000 set aside for the purpose so that, if we had asked for a like proportion we should have asked for £100,000; but we have only asked for £30,000, and part of this is for engagements already entered into. I think the House will see that, practically, we say that not only shall free immigration cease, but also nominated immigration. I do not wish to refer to what has been said by former speakers, but the honourable member for Geraldine has said that no hardship has occurred; but I would point out that hardship may occur without its being laid at the door of a department. There is no doubt in my mind that considerable hardship has been experienced owing to changes in the system. I do not wish to refer to cases, but many have come under my notice. know of men who have come out with the intention of getting their families out, and then, when they endeavoured to carry out their in-tentions, they have been told that the system has ceased. They have not known what to do, for they could neither go Home nor get their families out. There have been many cases of such hardship, though I do not mean to say that the blame is to be laid at the door of any particular department. The fact was that the money proved to be insufficient; the labour market was overstocked, and therefore they did not wish to spend money or to import more labour. The honourable member for Parnell rightly pointed out that in Victoria there has been no immigration out of loan. They have met the expenditure out of ordinary revenue.

Mr. HOLMES.—It comes out of Land Fund. Mr. STOUT.—Yes: that was the system here under the provinces. But I do not know that it matters much where the expenditure comes from. The real question is, whether the expenditure is advisable. Whether it comes out of loan or out of Land Fund does not matter much -it still comes from the public purse. In the present state of the labour market the Government believe that it is inadvisable to continue assisted immigration. I think it was a great mistake, though I do not lay the blame at the door of any particular Government, to have brought tradesmen out from Home to enter into competition with the tradesmen of the colony. We have sufficient tradesmen already, and the importation of more has been an injury to the tradesmen of the colony and to the

Mr. HOLMES,—A question has been raised by the honourable member for Sydenham as to the amount which is now available for immigration purposes. It was said by the Colonial Treasurer that there was only a sum of some £13,000 available for immigration purposes in future. But, on referring to the Public Works Statement that has been put before the House

by the Government, I find a table which gives some information upon this subject. I find that on the 81st March the liabilities were £51,000; the liabilities incurred by August were £11,280, making the total liabilities £62,280. There is proposed to be voted £100,000; so that I find there is £37,000 available for use by the Government since the 30th August; and the Government has not shown, neither has the Treasurer, nor the Minister of Lands, nor the Minister for Public Works, that that £37,000 is pledged by any obligations incurred in the past to be performed since the 31st August last. It appears that, instead of having a sum of only £13,000 for future use, the Government propose to borrow something like £30,000 for future use, and there is now unexpended a sum of £37,000, also for future use. If the table shows us what is really the fact, then I think we have not been treated with that candour by the Government with which we should have been treated. I was sorry to hear the Premier say that it did not matter where the money came from, so long as we had it to spend. Surely it matters something whether a man is living out of his own income or borrowing money upon his assets in order to live upon this. Surely that matters, and surely it matters whether we are able, out of our revenue saved each year, to spend a certain sum of money for the purposes of immigration, or whether we have to borrow on our assets in order to introduce immigrants. I say that to borrow for that purpose is a most pernicious system. If the labour were absolutely required I would go with the Colonial Treasurer, who seems to take the only reasonable view, that, if labour is required, it should be introduced, but should first be selected by properly-appointed agents, who would know their business, and send out the right sort of labour. This nomination system is a "fad" of the honourable member for Geraldine, and, like all his "fads' and views, is thoroughly wrong, crude, and foolish in the extreme. If he knew anything about the effect of it he would know that year after year he has been spending public money to bring out men who cannot find employment. Painters, glaziers, tailors, and shoemakers have been brought out, when there were plenty of these men in the colony. Already we have more painters, glaziers, and shoemakers than we know what to do with.

An Hon. MEMBER.—And lawyers.

Mr. HOLMES.—And lawyers. More of them are produced or grown in the colony than the colony can employ. And what is the result? That these persons become loafers upon the State and the settlers who, out of humanity sometimes give them work. During the last twelve months I have known some of these persons, who were brought out under this nomination system so highly favoured by the honourable member for Geraldine, who had to be supplied with funds by their friends here in order to go back to their friends in Great Britain, as they were utterly useless. That is only one instance of the incompetent administration of the honourable member for Geraldine. I was not here at the beginning to hear him glorify himself, and I regret it; but I was here at the end, and heard his usual jeremiad about the iniquity of this Government in proposing to borrow money for the erection of wooden buildings. Yet the honourable member must recollect that in 1882 Opposition members denounced him and his Government for proposing to borrow £300,000 to be spent on public buildings. I refer honourable members to "The New Zealand Loan Act, 1882," brought down by that honourable member's Government, and they will see that by it no less than £300,000 was to be spent on public buildings. And I should like to know what public buildings they put up except wooden buildings, such as the large post office down by the wharf in this town. An Hon, MEMBER.—That is made of brick

and stone.

Mr. HOLMES.—Well, it matters very little whether it is brick or stone or wood, because the money had to be borrowed to put up public buildings. Money was borrowed to put up public buildings, and the honourable member was a party to that in 1882; yet he condemns the same thing in 1884. Such is the inconsistency and want of political principle of the honourable member for Geraldine. I very much regret that the Government should have put any vote at all in the Bill for immigration. In the present state of the labour market I think it is an unwise and improper thing to do, and, if a division is called for, I shall vote against the third reading of the Bill.

Mr. MONTGOMERY.—Before the honourable gentleman replies, I wish he would explain further with regard to these figures. I understood that on the 31st March last there was an unexpended balance of £87,000 for immigration out of the Three-Million Loan. Since then liabilities have been incurred to the amount of £62,000, leaving a balance of £25,000 for immigration out of the Three-Million Loan. Tonight we are voting £30,000, which means that we are placing in the hands of the Government £55,000 for fresh immigration. When the Colonial Treasurer replies, perhaps he will explain the matter differently; but that was not the opinion the Committee formed on the honourable gentleman's explanation, because he said that there was only £13,000 needed.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—The figures the honourable member has quoted are perfectly correct; but he omitted to state that in the immigration estimates this year of £100,000 there is provision made for all the nominations which are known to exist. If the money is not expended, so much the better; but it has been deemed by the Government necessary to provide this amount. They have provided it, and, if all the nominations known to exist are exercised, then there will be remaining, as the Colonial Treasurer has stated, this small balance of the loan to be voted next year.

Major ATKINSON.—What is the amount of nominations, roughly estimated?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—They are estimated to come within a few pounds of the sum of £100,000 on the estimates for this year.

Mr. Holmes

An Hon. MEMBER.—With the £37,000?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—Yes. Supposing they are all exercised, it will leave a small balance, and whatever is not expended out of that will have to be revoted by the House next session, if it thinks fit.

Mr. HOLMES. - You have not referred to

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—It is just the balance between what was on those tables and £100,000.

Mr. W. WHITE.-Do I understand that the Government wish to expend £37,000 in bringing in more immigrants from the present time up to the 31st March next? If so, I think they will take a very injudicious step, considering that they have at the present time hundreds of men working as unemployed in different parts of the colony. When the honourable member for Akaroa rose I was about to lay the same figures before the House. I understood the Colonial Treasurer to state, in replying on the committal of the Bill, that £17,000 of this £30,000 was already pledged. On the 1st September last they had a clear balance in hand out of the last loan, after paying all liabilities up to that date, of £24,720 still available. To that we have to add £30,000 now asked for, which makes £54,720 which the Government have to expend; but, from the remarks made by the Treasurer, I understood him to wish the House to believe that they had only a sum of £13,000 available out of the £30,000 asked for in this Bill after paying liabilities. But not only have they £13,000, but they have an additional sum, making up £54,720 to spend on immigration; and now, from the remarks made by the Minister for Public Works, I understand certain persons have been nominated at Home who were not brought out this year, and it is proposed to ask for an additional vote of £30,000 for appropriation this year. Or, rather, they ask for an appropriation of £100,000, and of that we have present liabilities amounting to £62,280. To meet the £37,720 now available of the £100,000, there is £24,720 of the loan of 1882 unexpended, and the balance will come out of the amount now asked for. I think the Government really do not understand what amount is available. understand their own Statement. The Premier tells us that one-half of this sum is already pledged on account of past applications. I cannot at all think that one-half of it is pledged, nor can I understand it from these statements. In reference to the remarks of the honourable member for Geraldine, I agree that it is probable there are very few of the recent arrivals among the unemployed. But we must remember that at the present time we allow people here to nominate friends to come out, and when they bring them here they provide them with work, and put off some of their old hands, who are thrown upon the country, and have to look for work wherever they can find it. I do not see any difference, whether the unemployed are new-comers or not. The newcomers simply come here and are placed on the labour market to compete with other labourers.

During the last few years we have expended | hundreds of thousands of pounds upon immigration; and what has been done? We have not put out work for them to do, and some of the best labour has gone to the neighbouring colonies, who are getting the benefit of our expenditure. I think we could now do without immigration for a year or two, and if we have work to do we can bring out immigrants. But do not bring out people to work at 4s. and 5s. a day, to which, I am sorry to say, I believe some honourable members would like to see wages brought. We first pay to bring out men, and

New Zealand

then we pay them again as unemployed.

Mr. BALLANCE.—I may place this matter in a newer light, but I cannot place it in a truer light than it has been already put in. am astonished that honourable members have not understood the statement made by my colleagues. It seems perfectly clear. In the first place, let it be clearly understood that we are not responsible for this immigration vote. We are not responsible for introducing the immigrants who are to be brought in this The position is this: We have laid down no new policy with regard to immigration, except this: that we are now, as it were, bringing the immigration system to a close as quickly as we possibly can. What has been done has been done in the past. Obligations have been incurred, and we are attempting as far as we possibly can, in accordance with the statement previously made to the House, to fulfil those obligations. We were asked during the present session what we were going to do in regard to those who had already paid money to have their friends brought out from Great Britain, and we replied that we considered we were bound to fulfil all existing obligations, as a matter of good faith—that, where money had been paid in the colony for the purpose of introducing immigrants, we thought we were bound to fulfil those obligations and send instructions to the Agent-General that the passages would be provided. The honourable member for Geraldine stated to-night that he drew up regulations to prevent anything in the shape of disappointment. I do not know if

that was the case, but I do know that immigration was suddenly stopped.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—Not suddenly.

Mr. BALLANCE.—Yes, suddenly, by calogram to the Agent-General. In the meantime people had paid deposits in the colony to bring out their friends; letters had gone Home to those people stating that money had been paid, and that if they applied to the Agent-General he would provide them with passages. Well, a large number of persons acted on the advice of their friends in the colony, sold out, and went to London, to be told by the Agent-General that he had received instructions from the colony not to send out any more emigrants. money was paid for about two thousand persons altogether. I do not say that all these broke up their homes and went to London, but a large number did; and I have seen specimens of the letters from these persons who had sold out and gone to London, and I can assure the

House that some of them were of a most heartrending character. Now, the position is this: that, from the knowledge we had of the letters which these people had written, we considered that the Government was bound, in good faith, to fulfil the promises which had been made to them; and so the Agent-General was instructed to send them out. There are about two thousand statute adults who have to be provided for in this way. Then, again, the system of nomi-nating single women has not been stopped. It is a question of policy whether it should be stopped or not; but the late Government did not stop it, and we have not yet reversed their policy; so that nominations for single women are still received at the different immigration offices throughout the colony. With regard to any further expenditure that there may be, we have fathers and mothers of families who have come out to the colony, leaving their children behind them in the expectation that they would be able to send for them. We have, to a certain extent, recognized the claims of people so placed. That is the exact position of affairs. And, now, let me explain the votes. We have taken this year a sum of £100,000. The balance of the £200,000 of the Three-Million Loan appropriated to immigration is £87,000, and we expect that, after fulfilling those engagements to which the honourable gentleman has referred, we shall, by the end of the year, have absorbed all the money that is left out of the Three-Million Loan plus £13,000 out of the Million and a Half Loan. We shall then have £17,000 out of the Million and a Half Loan to carry on such immigration as the Government may determine on next year. Now, with regard to whether £17,000 is an excessive sum, let me note this: We do not say that we shall continue immigration: that will depend on the state of the labour market; but, if we do bring out single women, that will not be too much. In fact, the money is only calculated to bring out 1,100 statute adults. If the House bring out 1,100 statute adults. will look into the matter carefully, it will see that it is not at all the policy of the Government to bring out a considerable number of immigrants. Indeed, we are very moderate in our proposals in only asking for £17,000 for next year, and we may not go even to that extent. Now, compare the large amounts which have been taken in the past for immigration with the small sum put down for next year. We are only taking £17,000 out of the Million and a Half Loan, while £200,000 was taken out of the Three-Million Loan, and we were spending at the rate of £100,000 a year. I say that no honourable member can say, under those circumstances, that this Government is overstocking the labour market.

Mr. HOBBS.—I wish to record my protest against the arguments used by the honourable member for Christchurch South. As I understand it, the Government only intend to intro-duce persons who are nominated by their friends, and who are a very desirable class to introduce, because they mostly bring large amounts of money into the country, and their friends find employment for them when they come here. Certainly, they are not to be found among the class to whom we have heard so much reference this evening. But the honourable gentlemen who have spoken have only referred to one part of the country, and that is a place which, in my opinion, has been very much overdone in good things. I enter my protest against the arguments of those honourable gentlemen, for I consider it is for the good of the country that we should have nominated immigration.

Amendments agreed to, and Bill read a third time.

ARMED CONSTABULARY.

On the motion for going into Committee of

Supply,
Mr. BRYCE said,—Before you go into Committee of Supply, Mr. Speaker, I want to draw attention to one portion of the estimates, and that is the portion of the estimates in which it is proposed to make a reduction in the Armed Constabulary Force. If I understand the proposed reduction aright, it is intended to reduce that Force to the extent of some 200 Otherwise, I do not understand how the 25,000 can be saved in the time in which it is stated it will be saved. For my own part, I think that reduction cannot be made without disorganizing the Force; and I think it would be a pity, in the present circumstances of the colony, to do anything which might disorganize the Force, which I think a valuable one. I know it has been industriously circulated in this colony, and has indeed been hinted by members of the House, that the late Government—and I, particularly—always advocated keeping up this Force to a high number, and relied upon the Force for the management, in fact, of Native affairs by me—for that "reign for the management, in fact, of the management, in fact, or which was a six how now all the management." of terrorism," as it has been called. Now, I think it is due to myself-and I may say that I have never, whilst a Minister, on any occasion corrected any newspaper in reference to utterances in regard to myself, and only on one or two occasions when I was not a Minister -I say I think it is due to myself and the late Government to point out how utterly inconsistent this impression is with the real facts of the case. When I joined the Hall Government, five years ago or more, the Force stood at 910 men, and it had stood at that number for some little time. The Force was then in a very efficient state. It was being slightly in-creased from time to time. For a month or two after I took office, from circumstances over which I had little or no control, it was still further slightly increased, and it rose to 976 men that is to say, an increase of about sixty. But from that time to this, so far from increasing the Force, I have never allowed a single month to pass during which I was in office without reducing that Force. Notwithstanding that it was thought desirable to conduct operations which required Constabulary on the West Coast shortly after I took office, the Force was nevertheless reduced to a very considerable extent —I mean immediately after the first month or two had passed—until, after I had been in office fifteen months, it was reduced on the 31st

January, 1881, to 782 men. Circumstances occurred which seemed to render an increase desirable during the time I was absent from office, and it was increased then, during that nine months of my absence, until it reached 1,074 men, which was 164 more than I found in the Force left by Colonel Whitmore. But from that time to this there has been a steady, uniform, and very considerable reduction month by month. I will hand this monthly return to Hansard, and will not weary the House by reading it; but I simply say that, month by month, the reduction has been steady and tolerably uniform, and as rapid as it could be without disorganization of the Force, until at the end of last July it stood at 467 men. I do not intend to dwell further upon these facts, but just to state them as showing that, so far from evincing an inclination to increase this Force, the late Government have manifested a persistent disposition, as is proved by this monthly statement, to reduce it month by month down to the very low number at which it now stands. I have only to add that I think that, although it would be well to go on making this systematic reduction, which involves no disorganization, it would not be well to make any reduction which would completely disorganize the Force, taking an unnecessary risk, and a risk which the circumstances do not warrant. I simply wish to get upon record this protest, as it were, against the incorrect impression that prevails.

Return showing Monthly Strength of Field Force, Armed Constabulary, since Sept., 1879.

Date.	Total.	Date.	TL
Sept. 30, 1879	910	Feb. 28,1882	984
Oct. 31 "	904	Mar. 31 "	952
Nov. 30 "	913	April 30 ,	927
Dec. 31 "	927	May 31	895
Jan. 31, 1880	964	June 30	877
Feb. 29 .	997	July 31 "	845
Mar. 31 "	996	Aug. 31	832
April 30 "	998	Sept. 30	723
May 31 "	991	Oct. 31	700
June 30 "	981	Nov. 30	682
July 31 ,	970	Dec. 31	660
Aug. 31 "	887	Jan. 31,1883	651
Sept. 30 "	829		647
Oct. 31 "	820	Mar. 31	634
Nov. 30 "	805	April 30	627
Dec. 31 "	791	May 31	634
Jan. 31, 1881	782	June 30	619
Feb. 28 "	768	July 31 "	616
Mar. 31 "	739		611
April 80 "	717	Sept. 30 "	604
May 81 "	679	Oct. 31	598
June 30	672	Nov. 30	592
July 31 "	664	Dec. 31	586
Aug. 31 " .	678		578
Sept. 80 "	802	Feb. 29	571
Oct. 31 "	1,074	Mar. 31	492
Nov. 80 "	1,076	April 30	483
Dec. 31 "	1.045	May 31	481
Jan. 31, 1882		July 31	467
Vall. 01, 1002	,001	0 44, 02	

Mr. Hobbs



Mr. BALLANCE.—I am not going into a general discussion of the Native policy of the past or of the present Government, and I will confine myself simply to the question of the expediency of reducing the Armed Constabu-lary. The honourable gentleman admits that it is desirable to go on reducing the Force; he therefore admits that the Force may be reduced with safety. But the honourable gentleman's difficulty is that, if it is reduced suddenly, it might disorganize the Force, and therefore he thinks that the reduction might be a great calamity. I agree with the honourable gentleman — and I am very glad he has admitted it—that the Force may be still further reduced. The question, then, is, What is the best means of bringing the Force down to the standard which will be consistent with safety and economy at the same time? That appears to me to be the whole question. My own opinion is that the Force may be safely reduced to three hundred men; and I think we should, in making a reduction to that number, proceed with great care and caution, to prevent anything in the way of disorganization. Although we are reducing it by degrees, we are not doing anything which, in my opinion, will have the effect of disorganizing the Force, or anything, in the opinion of the professional gentlemen connected with the department, which will be calculated to disorganize it. The honourable gentleman may say, "You propose to save £5,000 this year, and that implies a sudden reduction in the Force." The honourable gentleman and I differ upon this point: He thinks the proper system of reduction would be by accepting resignations and making no new appointments; while I am inclined to go a little further. Now, it appears to me that there are stations of Armed Constabulary which are not doing any good at all. Stations where there are only three, four, five, or six men located have no effect whatever in cowing or intimidating the Natives. It appeared to me to be rather irritating than otherwise. I am inclined to think that the number of stations might be reduced. On the East Coast, bodies of men are stationed where none are required, and these might with safety be dispensed with. Looking at the matter generally, I think the House should intrust large powers of responsibility to the Government. We are not likely to do anything rashly. I quite agree that caution and the greatest possible circumspec-tion should be exercised. We are still further reducing the number, believing we can do so with safety. I am sure the honourable gentleman will be the first to admit that the mode of doing so must rest on the responsibility of the Government. I do not say that the whole of this £5,000 can be saved this year, but I think it would be better to come on "Unauthorized for an additional sum rather than that nothing should be attempted. At any rate, our object will not be to save £5,000 this year, if the doing so would lead to the disorganization of the Force.

Motion agreed to.

#### SUPPLY.

IN COMMITTEE. . CLASS III.—COLONIAL TREASURER. Treasury Department, £7,948, agreed to.

Property-Tax Department, £7,495, agreed to. Friendly Societies' Registry Office, £1,450. Mr. PEACOCK apprehended this would in-

clude the amount of valuation for friendly societies. Considerable dissatisfaction existed about a year ago upon that point, and he would be glad to hear that this amount would cover  $\mathbf{that}.$ 

Sir J. VOGEL. - The amount does include the valuation for friendly societies.

Vote, £1,450, agreed to.

Miscellaneous services, £34,750.

Mr. GUINNESS would like to know whether it was proposed to continue the system of appointing Auditors who would have to travel considerable distances. It struck him that a good deal might be saved if local Auditors were appointed. A gentleman residing in Nelson audited the accounts in Inangahua, Buller, and Greymouth. Why should not a resident of Hokitika do the whole of the work for the West Coast?

Mr. SHRIMSKI said that, as a matter of fact, an Auditor residing in Dunedin audited for the whole of the public bodies throughout Otago, excepting Municipal Corporations.

Sir J. VOGEL considered that, if the Government were responsible, they must make the audit in their own way

Mr. GUINNESS did not mean that the Government should not appoint the Auditors, but that some one residing on the spot should be appointed. Vote, £34,750, agreed to.

CLASS I.—LEGISLATIVE.

Legislative Departments, £67,518.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN moved, That the first item, "Legislative Council—Chairman of Committees (also by Act £300), £100," be struck

Motion agreed to.

Mr. SHRIMSKI moved to reduce the item, "General Expenses - Examiner of Standing Orders on Private Bills, £250," by £200. The office was, he considered, entirely useless and unnecessary. The average number of private Bills was two every session, and these paid £10 on the first reading, £10 on the second reading, and £5 on the third reading. The Crown, The Crown, therefore, received £50 per annum, and was called upon to pay £250. The office involved a loss of money to the colony, and caused a great deal of trouble to members of the House. One of the confidential clerks should, he thought, have charge of this department, an increase of £50 per annum might be given to him, and a saving of £200 effected.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN said that considerable increase had been proposed in the Legislative Council Department, though the House had been taking care during the past few years that no increases should be made. He proposed, That the total amount be reduced by

£275.

Mr. STOUT explained, in case new members might not be aware of how the estimates for the Legislative Departments were framed, that the Government were not responsible for them. They were sent in by the Speakers, and were placed on the estimates, the Government not pledging itself to vote for them.

Mr. HOLMES said that similar increases were proposed in 1882, and, after a similar explanation from the Government, were re-

jected by the House.

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Mr. O'CALLAGHAN proposed, That the next increase—Item 3, "Clerk of the Council (also by Act £400), £200,"—be struck out.

Dr. NEWMAN remarked that these salaries

were really very small.

Mr. GUINNESS thought, if the officer were paid a yearly salary, and had to attend two sessions, some allowance might be made; but £100 extra was rather too much.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN said it was against his will he supported these reductions, and he only did so on the principle that this was not the

time for increasing salaries.

Sir J. VOGEL would like to point out, before this was put, that, though the Government were not responsible for these increases, they had come from the Legislative Council on the recommendation of the President, and it was to be presumed he would not make these recommendations unless he considered he had good grounds for doing so. They should consider whether they were doing their duty to the other branch of the Legislature by refusing to give such remuneration to its officers as the Council thought fit. They would consider themselves aggrieved if the Appropriation Act were thrown out because the other House considered the officers of the House of Representatives were unduly paid.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the item, 'Clerk of the Council (also by Act, £400), £200,' be reduced by £100."

AYES, 49. Allwright Hobbs Russell Barron Samuel Holmes Bevan Joyce Smith Steward, W. J. B.-Bradshaw Lake Bruce Lance Stout Bryce Levestan Sutter Buchanan Locke Thompson, T. Cadman Macandrew Thomson, J. W. Cowan Macarthur Tole Dodson Trimble Mackenzie, M. Fraser McMillan Turnbull Moat Fulton Walker Garrick Montgomery White, W. Gillies O'Conor Tellers. Grigg Peacock Harper Reese Duncan Hatch Richardson, G. O'Callaghan.

Noes, 14.

Ballance Brown Buckland, J. C. McKenzie, J. Fitzherbert Hursthouse

Johnston Larnach Pyke Seddon

Vogel Wilson. Tellers. Guinness Newman.

Majority for 35.

Item reduced.

Mr. SUTTER moved, That the item, "Clerk-Assistant, £400," be reduced by £50. Agreed to.

Mr. SAMUEL moved, That the item, "Second Clerk-Assistant, £225," be reduced by £25.

Agreed to.

Mr. SHRIMSKI moved, That the item, "Examiner of Standing Orders on Private Bills, £250," be reduced by £200.

Sir MAURICE O'RORKE hoped the Committee would not interfere with this item. It was absolutely necessary to have an Examiner, unless the House came to a decision to do away with private-Bill legislation. present Examiner had held the office for the last fifteen years, and he had been paid this amount for the last ten years. The office was partly self-supporting, for, although the £25 paid on each private Bill did not go into the general revenue, it went to the library.

Mr. SHRIMSKI could not see the use of the office at all. If people were getting private Bills passed at enormous cost to the colony it ought to be stopped. It seemed that any Bill could be passed for £25, though it might cost the country £250. During each of the last two sessions there had been only four private Bills, for which £100 had been received; therefore the country had lost £150 a year by private-Bill legislation. As a taxpayer, he objected to paying for other people to get private Bills passed. One of the confidential clerks could undertake the office for £50 extra. He objected altogether that, because this gentleman was a Wellington man, a useless office should be kept going at the cost of the colony.

Mr. PEACOCK asked why, though £250 was voted last year, only £229 was paid. Sir J. VOGEL replied that it was because the

balance had been drawn after the close of the

financial year.

Mr. W. WHITE said, as a great portion of the year had gone, it would be necessary, in any case, to vote a sufficient amount to cover that.

Mr. SHRIMSKI said, though he strongly opposed the continuance of the office, he would of course support a vote for what was right and fair in respect to the part of the year already past, if the Government would state what that amount would be.

Dr. NEWMAN said, as the session was nearly over, he thought this officer ought to be paid the same amount in respect of it as he had been paid for the last ten years.

Mr. SAMUEL would like to hear from the Government whether this office was necessary. Sir J. VOGEL said honourable members were quite as well able to judge as the Government whether the salary was a fair one, and whether or not the office was necessary.

Mr. HATCH thought the Government should consider whether offices could not be amal gamated, so that the persons employed might have more duties to discharge after the House prorogued.

Sir MAURICE O'RORKE pointed out that

it was quite impossible for the Clerk of Committees to discharge his present duties and act as Examiner of Standing Orders on Private Bills. Banks or wealthy companies having private Bills might be required to pay a larger fee, so that the office might become self-supporting.

Mr. SHRIMSKI did not believe in charging extra fees to keep up an office that was not re-

onired.

Mr. HOBBS believed that the work could be done for £100, and the sum should be reduced

bv.£150.

Mr. O'CONOR thought the office was a sinecure, and there was no necessity for the payment of a permanent salary for the work required to be done. The item should be struck out altogether, and the Government should pay the amount now due.

Mr. SEDDON said that since he had been a member of the House there had not been on an average more than one private Bill a year. The work could be done by the payment of fees. Sinecures of this kind should be dis-

pensed with.

Mr. GILLIES did not believe the office was so unnecessary as some honourable members seemed to think. At the same time it must be borne in mind that it was not altogether a desirable thing to have an officer of this sort paid by fees. Wealthy companies might bring matters before him which he could help on as he might deem prudent or right, and such an officer ought to be entirely above suspicion.

Sir MAURICE O'RORKE said, if the salary was voted, the officer might be required in future sessions to attend Select Committees on

Local Bills.

Mr. O'CONOR did not see how the House could support the payment of this salary to a

layman.

Mr. SHRIMSKI said that, if the library received the fees, some person in the library could discharge the duties for £50, and the country would thus be saved £200 a year. This officer could not attend to the duties of Clerk of the Local Bills Committee and Private Bills Committee, for he would frequently be wanted in both places at once.

The Committee divided.

AYES, 23.

Barron ·	Lance	Richardson, G.
Bruce	Larnach '	Seddon
Cowan	Macandrew	Steward, W. J.
Duncan	Macarthur	Sutter
Grigg	McMillan	Turnbull.
Hatch	Moat	Tellers.
Hobbs	Montgomery	O'Conor
Holmes	O'Callaghan	Shrimski.
	NoEs, 38.	
Allwright	Fulton	Locke
Ballance	Garrick	Mackenzie, M.
BBradshaw	Gillies	McKenzie, J.
Bryce	Harper	Newman
Buchanan	Johnston	O'Rorke
Buckland, J. C.	Joyce	Peacock
Dodson	Lake .	Pyke
Fraser	Levestam .	Reese

Richardson, E.	Shephard	Vogel		
Rolleston	Smith	Walker.		
Ross	Thompson, T.	Tellers.		
Russell	Tole	Fitzherbert		
Samuel	Trimble	Guinness.		
Majority against, 15.				

Supply.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. SHRIMSKI moved, That the item be reduced by £100.

Sir MAURICE O'RORKE would rather see the item struck out altogether than reduced by this sum. This officer had entered the service many years ago, when quite a young man; he had since entered upon the responsibilities of life, and to reduce the salary by such an amount would mean absolute ruin. If there was a very strong feeling that their system of private-Bill legislation should be altered altogether, let them consider the question at the beginning of next session. He was not strongly in favour of that system, and would not hesitate to have a full consideration of it. He had taken a great deal of interest many years ago in reducing the very complicated system then in existence with regard to private Bill legislation. He hoped the honourable gentleman, having already tested the feeling of the Committee, would abstain from pressing his motion.

Mr. SHRIMSKI admitted that the Speaker had made a very earnest appeal; but he, also, had a duty to perform. He was the last person to do any one an injury, but he must discharge his duties; and he would also point out that, if they did thus reduce the item by £100, this officer would still be getting three times more

than he got when first appointed.

Mr. SHEPHARD would point out, in reply to a remark previously made by the honourable member for Oamaru, that this officer had for several years actually discharged the duties of Clerk to the Local Bills Committee.

The Committee divided.

THE COMMISSION WINDOW.					
	AYES, 35.				
Ballance	Macarthur '	Stewart, W. D.			
Barron	McKenzie, J.	Stout			
Brown	McMillan	Sutter			
Bruce	Moat	Thompson, T.			
Cadman	Montgomery	Tole			
Cowan	O'Callaghan	Turnbull			
Gillies	O'Conor	Vogel			
Grigg	Pearson	Walker			
Hatch	Richardson, E.	White, W.			
Hobbs	Richardson, G.	Tellers.			
Holmes	Seddon	Duncan			
Lance	Steward, W. J.	Shrimski.			
Nors, 17.					
D Dandaham	Lobe	Commol			

B.-Bradshaw Lake Samuel
Bryce Levestam Trimble
Buckland, J.C. Mackenzie, M. Wilson.
Dodson O'Rorke Tellers.
Guinness Pyke Fulton
Joyce Reese Newman.

Majority for, 18. Item reduced by £100.

Sir J. VOGEL explained that, through a misprint, the item "Reporters" appeared as

£2,550, instead of £2,400. He would therefore move that it be reduced by £150.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. SEDDON would like provision made on the supplementary estimates for the compositors who were kept here during the interval between the sessions, earning, on an average,

only 15s. a week.
Mr. W. J. STEWARD pointed out that the
Reporting Debates and Printing Committee had already made a recommendation to the

Government on this subject.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN said that he found an injustice had been done to the Chairman of Committees of the Legislative Council in striking out the increase of £100. When he moved the motion he was not aware that it covered the work of the Chairman of Committees for two sessions. He hoped the Government would see their way to renew the

vote in some shape.

Sir J. VOGEL was glad the honourable gentleman had mentioned this matter, as he was quite sure the House would be very sorry to do an injustice, which it clearly would be if they made the Chairman of Committees in the Legislative Council pay £120 for the privilege of doing the work. He only drew £300 as the vote now stood, whereas the other members of the Council drew £420 for two honoraria. The vote could not be restored to-night, but would have to be brought down on the supplementary estimates.

Mr. LEVESTAM would like to have an explanation of the item £300, for electric lighting. He would like to know what saving it was, as they had to keep the gas burning as

well.

Sir J. VOGEL said that the great saving which he thought honourable members could not afford to disregard was the saving of health. There was no doubt that the electric light was immensely more healthy than gas. With regard to cost, he was not able to give a statement off-hand, but he thought he was quite within the facts when he said it was not more expensive than, if as expensive as, gas. If they were to have an equivalent amount of gaslight it would cost them more than the electric light. It was true they would have extra heat from the gas; but that was an equivocal advantage.

Mr. LEVESTAM said they might benefit through the electric light being more healthy if the gas were not burning as well, but that

was the case.

Mr. DUNCAN would like to see either the gas or the electric light done away with, as there was as large a consumption of gas now

as there had always been.

Mr. FULTON, as one who sat under the gas for some years, hoped the electric light would be continued, as it made the chamber much more healthy.

Vote, as reduced, £66,993, agreed to.

CLASS II.—COLONIAL SECRETARY. Colonial Secretary's Office, £1,905, agreed to. Ministers' Secretaries, £800, agreed to.

Sir J. Vogel

Messengers and office-keepers, £3,605.

Mr PEACOCK wished to know why it was . necessary to pay £281 for office-keepers at Dunedin, when only £35 was required in Auckland for the same service.

Sir J. VOGEL explained that these were old provincial liabilities, which the Government had to meet. The difference in the amounts of the votes was caused by the fact that the messengers and office-cleaners in Auckland were also charged departmentally.

Vote, £3,605, agreed to.

Electoral, £7,955, agreed to. Audit Office, £8,732, agreed to.

Registrar - General's Department, £7,122, agreed to.

Geological and Meteorological Department, £3.640.

Mr. DUNCAN asked if the Government thought this money was well spent. He thought himself that the weather forecasts were of very little use, as the weather generally turned out quite the contrary to what was predicted.

Sir J. VOGEL said full value was returned

for every item in this vote.

Mr. LEVESTAM had almost always found the weather forecasts correct and very useful.

Mr. O'CONOR, having some knowledge of shipping matters, could also bear testimony to the value of the weather forecasts, which often saved people from great dangers.

Mr. GILLIES would point out that, through the insufficiency of this vote in a previous session, the colony had lost the services of a most valuable officer, Mr. Cox, the Assistant Geologist, who had gone away in consequence of the smallness of his salary under this vote.

Dr. NEWMAN said that this colony had paid Mr. Cox £350 a year, and he had gone to Sydney, where he received about double that

salary.

Sir J. VOGEL quite agreed that it was a great pity that this officer had been allowed

Vote, £3,640, agreed to.

Agent-General's Department, £4,100, agreed

Charitable, £85,200.

Mr. COWAN hoped the Government would give some assurance that each district throughout the colony would be treated in an equitable manner.

Sir J. VOGEL said this vote was only a continuation of the present condition of affairs, which was the most inequitable and illogical that could possibly be conceived. stance, Wellington received more for its hospital by 50 per cent. than Christchurch got. The present state of things resulted from these institutions being taken over from the provinces, each being dealt with according to the system in force in the province. He thought it would have been much more satisfactory had there been a local rate. He hoped that when members returned to their districts they would stimulate the people into subscribing liberally towards these institutions. Meantime it would be folly to lead the Committee to suppose that

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the vote would be treated differently from last year. The subject was one which should be dealt with comprehensively. Next year the Government would bring down a measure with a view to localizing these institutions and their support.

Mr. FULTON said that, in consequence of the inequalities that now existed, the people in some districts, who had always subscribed liberally, refused now to put their hands in their pockets, because other districts that did not subscribe a penny got more from the Government than those that did subscribe.

Sir J. VOGEL asked why the honourable gentleman did not complain last year when the Government he supported was in office.

Mr. SHRIMSKI was surprised that the honourable member for the Taieri had never raised his voice against the present inequalities. He (Mr. Shrimski) had never missed an opportunity of doing so. They had no right to encourage large and wealthy districts to depend altogether on the Government. The Government ought to bring in a measure providing that every institution should be made self-reliant, and that the State would contribute pound for pound raised in each district.

Sir J. VOGEL said it was impossible for the Government to deal with the subject this session, but they would do so next year. Meantime it was their duty to see that no absolute

destitution should exist.

Mr. HATCH said it was a standing disgrace to the large cities that they asked for assistance from the Government while they did not subscribe a penny towards these institutions.

scribe a penny towards these institutions.

Mr. SEDDON said the honourable member for the Taieri had on more than one occasion pointed out the inequalities that existed with regard to the charitable-aid vote. With regard to the Wellington Hospital, that institution was not as well conducted as it might be. By a return which had been furnished it would be seen that, in proportion to population, there was more money subscribed on the West Coast for hospitals than in any other part of New Zealand. He desired to say, also, that more accommodation was necessary, and he wished to know whether, as the vote stood, there would be sufficient to provide the additional accommodation at the Kumara hospital. Although money was liberally subscribed, there was not sufficient to pay the cost of these institutions in his district; and, as some persons who were well able did not subscribe at all, while others gave liberally, he believed it would be more fair to levy a rate.
Mr. PEACOCK hoped that the Government

Mr. PEACOCK hoped that the Government would bring down a comprehensive measure, and put the whole of these institutions on a similar basis. While in one part of the colony favour was shown by the Government, people would not subscribe with the liberality they would otherwise. In Auckland they were beginning to be pressed for room, and something would have to be done. He hoped the Government measure would be of such a character as to stimulate the liberality of the people.

Mr. LEVESTAM thought there should be a

general tax on the colony. As patients went from one locality to another it would be unfair to compel each district to maintain its own destitute.

Dr. NEWMAN remarked that the hospitals in large towns drained the surrounding country, and, where doctors had attained renown, patients came from long distances to the hospital. A local rate would press unfairly upon large cities, while country districts where there were no hospitals would escape altogether. The hospitals, he believed, were well managed.

Mr. GILLIES said there was a great difference between hospitals, as would be seen if they looked at the cost per patient. This, he thought, should not exist, and there should be some general supervision, so as to make the expenses tally. Something general should be done, as the springs of benevolence among the people were being dried up by the present uncertain condition of affairs. He would greatly deplore the putting-on of a poor-rate in this free country; and there was, he believed, no necessity for it, if proper regulations were made.

Mr. PEACOCK thought they should not overlook the valuable services that were rendered by the medical visiting staff in Auckland and other large towns of the colony. Their services were rendered without remuneration, and should, at all events, be appreciated.

Mr. HATCH said that the hospitals where a pound-for-pound subsidy was given were more economically and better managed than those for which the whole of the money was subscribed by the Government.

Mr. GILLIES was afraid the honourable gentleman's facts were not correct; and his statement that every sixpence for the Dunedin Hospital came from the Government was not

quite correct.

Mr. O'CONOR thought that the system of grants to local Committees was bad, and that there was a growing necessity for making provision for the aged and decrepit. The present land system was likely to increase this evil. A great portion of the best land of the country was virtually shut up from the use of the people, and in any country where that was the case the mass of the people must be poor. He thought that some of the good land that was being secured should be set aside for the purpose of making asylums for the poor, which, if they did not like the term "poorhouses," might be called "houses for the poor."

Mr. LEVESTAM thought the proper time for this discussion would arrive when the proposals of the Government on the question were

before the House.

Mr. G. F. RICHARDSON asked if the Government would give an assurance that at the commencement of next financial year the distribution should be on a different basis.

Sir J. VOGEL could not give that assurance, as he had not been able to see how far the Government could deal with the question on its own authority; but the Government would endeavour to deal with it.

Mr. DUNCAN moved, That the vote be reduced by £20,000; as that would bring matters

to a crisis, and show that the system was not to | be continued.

Supply.

Motion negatived. Vote, £85,200, agreed to. Lunatic Asylums, £40,983.

Mr. PEACOCK asked the Government to reconsider the question of increasing the salaries of the warders at lunatic asylums, and to place a sum on the supplementary estimates for that purpose.

Sir J. VOGEL thought it was a mistake for

the honourable member to urge an increase of payment. The officers were contented to give their services on the present terms, though no doubt they would gladly use the influence of any member to get an addition to their salaries. It was, if he might be allowed to say so, a mistake for members to recommend the Government to pay more than was found necessary. The question had previously been brought forward, and, as had been explained, the lunaticasylum warders were boarded, and the gaol warders had to find their own board, and this accounted for the difference in their salaries.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN thought the Government could not be aware of the great discrepancy, and that asylum attendants were the lowest-paid public servants of any. The lowest net salary of a gaol warder was £151, and he had to find himself. The lowest net pay an asyto find himself. The lowest net pay an asylum attendant received was £48 6s., and he received rations estimated to cost £18, a total of £61 6s., as compared with the gaol warder's Naturally this great discrepancy led to a continual strong feeling among the asylum attendants, who considered themselves underpaid, and were not satisfied with their position. That there were always many applicants for vacancies was no argument. A return last year showed that, out of twenty-seven men appointed, only four were found to remain permanently; the greater number left just as they were becoming useful, and some of them left to become gaol warders. This state of things was detrimental to the asylums.

Sir J. VOGEL said the honourable member's calculation was rather ingenious than correct. Rations got in a wholesale way by contract might cost £18 per year per man; but what man could ration himself for 7s. a week? If the men had to find themselves it would cost them each at least £40 or £45 a year. Whether prison warders were paid too much was a different question. As a matter of fact, he was informed that there were on an average at least twenty-five applicants for any vacancy in the office of asylum attendant, which the honourable gentleman considered so ill paid. That being so, it seemed an unnecessary expenditure

to add to the price paid.

Mr. PEACOCK said the mere fact that there were many applicants for vacancies in the asvlums should not be over-estimated: the applicants might only be seeking temporary employment, and, when they were becoming useful, might leave. The difference between an asylum attendant's pay and a gaol warder's was very reat. In the first step an attendant's pay was £70, and, allowing £39 as an estimate of the cost of board, there was £109; while a gaol warder in the first step got £135, a difference of The difference was the cause of great dissatisfaction among the asylum attendants.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN said, in mentioning

that the lowest pay of an asylum attendant was £43 6s. net, he should have said this was after deducting what it cost him as rent when he lived outside the asylum. Attendants had to pay for their own clothes; they often got them torn by the patients, but had to bear the cost themselves. Would the Government put a sum on the supplementary estimates to provide uniforms for asylum attendants?

Mr. SEDDON said if the Government would divide the money given to Local Inspectors among the attendants it would be money well These Inspectors received pay for doing nothing -or all they did was to open tenders. Quite a sufficient number of persons were ready to act as visitors without pay. He would not move to strike out the item for the Hokitika Inspector, because the position there was different from that in other places; but he hoped the Government would make inquiries There had been cases in into this matter. which the medical attendants of asylums had acted as Coroners on deaths in the asylums. That should be put a stop to.

Sir J. VOGEL said that had been summarily stopped. It was exceedingly wrong that medistopped. It was exceedingly wrong that medical attendants should act as Coroners or make post mortem examinations in the case of deaths in asylums. The Government did not see their way at present to increasing the pay of the asylum attendants. In making future appointments the question might arise. It was a very poor reason to say that something should be put on or taken off the salary of a man in Dunedin because some one in Auckland got less or more than the Dunedin man.

Mr. GILLIES said the Local Inspectors were a fifth wheel to the coach, and were not needed one bit. Here was a new office in the Dunedin Asylum, "Assistant Medical Officer, £200." Where was the need for that? No

other asylum had two medical officers.

Sir J. VOGEL said Local Inspectors could not be abolished without an alteration in the law, because they had certain statutory duties, such as discharging patients temporarily or permanently. Vote, £40,983, agreed to.

Printing and stationery, £20,975, agreed to.

Stock Branch, £30,360.

Mr. WALKER would take the opportunity of impressing several points on the attention of the Government, the more so as there had been no opportunity of discussing the report of the Joint Committee on the Sheep and Rabbit Certain districts in the colony now paid Acts. nearly the whole of the expenses of the department, which caused a great deal of dissatistac-tion; and the Committee—he spoke of himself as a member of it - only refrained from recommending the Government to adjust the inequality because they believed that at the present moment there was an urgent necessity that the Government should use every endea-

your under the Acts to stamp out the scab and rabbit pests; and therefore the Committee considered it would be inopportune to raise the question of expenditure now, considering it a merely subsidiary question that could be settled at another time. The Committee were most emphatic in urging that the scab pest should be stamped out, to enable New Zealand to take advantage of the Australian market for sheep; and it was clearly proved that it was only through the bad administration of the Acts that the colony was not now in a position to do so. He therefore earnestly impressed on the Government the necessity of a vigorous administration of the Sheep and Rabbit Acts in the spirit of the Committee's report.

Sir J. VOGEL said the Government had not

yet had time to fully consider the report and evidence of the Joint Committee, but they had had time to recognize that the labours of the Committee were of a most important character. Its recommendations deserved very high consideration, and the evidence was of an exceedingly interesting character. It would have to be considered by the Government very carefully. These estimates were made out before that report was brought down, and the amounts were similar to those passed last year. The Government would not be relieved from the duty of considering to what extent and in what manner they could give effect to the recom-mendations of the Committee. Those recommendations, summarized, amounted to this:

efficiency; and that sinecure positions should not be conferred upon any persons who could not find other employment. It was a strong recommendation on the part of the Committee that the Government should aid in introducing in large numbers the natural enemy of the rabbit—the ferret.

Mr. SMITH pointed out that the larger pro-

that the provisions of the Act should be vigorously carried out, without reference to local partiality or local feeling; that officers of the

department should be chosen only for their

portion of the money raised was paid by the Districts of Canterbury and Hawke's Bay, and that there should be a fairer division of the money expended in future.

Vote, £30,360, agreed to.

Miscellaneous services, £23,058. Tr. GILLIES would like to see £200 added to the sum of £500 put down as "Expenses of printing Transactions of New Zealand Insti-tute," as these Transactions afforded most valu-

able information to the public.

Sir J. VOGEL said the Transactions of the Institute were most interesting and important, and had been the means of giving to the colony a very valuable and useful literature. It was not competent for the Committee to increase If the amount on the estimates was not sufficient, he had no doubt the Government would find a means of supplementing it.

Mr. FULTON would like some information regarding the item, "Compilation of Maori History, £200"—as to what progress was being made with the work.

Sir J. VOGEL said the agreement with Mr.

White for the compilation of Maori history was. for four years, and the fourth year was about to expire. A considerable portion of the work was in the hands of the Government. It had been examined, and reported upon favourably, by experts.

Mr. MOSS believed the gentleman who was compiling this History had more information. to record than any man in New Zealand. He was, he (Mr. Moss) believed, entitled to a pension, and the payment of a small addition. would enable him to continue this work at very

little cost to the colony.

Mr. SEDDON, referring to the item, "Bonus for encouragement of local industries, £1,000, said that, considering the population and resources of New Zealand, it was behind the other colonies in regard to local industries. The amount on the estimates could not be increased; but the Government should during the recess see what means could be taken to push forward local industries at a far greater pace than at present. New Zealand should be the foremost in manufactures: provision should be made for giving trades to the thousands of children now in the colony. It was a standing disgrace for New Zealand, with its natural advantages and resources, to be behind the other colonies. Last year a sum of £500 was put down for importation of ova of salmon and other fish; but no sum was placed on the present estimates. He thought some provision should be made.

Sir J. VOGEL said the question of local industries was one of vast importance, and the Government intended to deal with it systematically. He knew that some honourable members had sneered at the suggestion made in the Financial Statement as to holding industrial exhibitions; but, if they did not arrive at a conclusion as to the present condition of their industries, they could not make a start in the way of improvement. In America they started what were called State Fairs, where the products of various industries were exhibited. These had proved of vast service, and after a few years they became self-supporting. The Government must endeavour to obtain information which might lead the people to arrive at a conclusion as to how far it was desirable to push certain industries, and how far they could ultimately be carried on with gain. There were many industries that might require assistance at the outset, but which afterwards might become exceedingly vigorous, and not only selfsupporting, but the means of yielding large revenue. He knew of no colony or country so important as New Zealand which was so far removed from land on every side. In his opinion her isolated position would be very much to her advantage in the way of rearing up a population that would be self-reliant and home-producing. It would be the duty of the Government to leave no stone unturned with the view of obtaining information as to how and by what. means local industries might be promoted. He believed, indeed, that the importance of the subject would justify him in going further back, and asking whether our system of education. went far enough toward assisting what he believed to be the destiny of the colony—the becoming a self-supporting population, producing all its chief requirements: in other words, was sufficient attention paid to technical education? He was strongly of opinion that technical education should be an element in the education system. On the supplementary estimates there would be a vote of £1,000 for the industrial exhibition. As for this £1,000 for bonuses, it was not expected that more than that would be claimed before the 31st March next. As to the acclimatization of fish, there were five societies-those of Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Oamaru, and Timaru—which were together subscribing £250, and the Government would give £250—£1 for £1—and £100 in addition. The money was to be expended in despatching Home a gentleman who had special knowledge of and took a large interest in the subject, with a view to his bringing out a shipment of salmon ova.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked for information about the Domesday Book, which had been

prepared at a cost of £2,200.

Sir J. VOGEL said this extravagant work was almost ready for issue. There would be 700 copies for sale. They would be sold for £1 10s. each.

Vote, £23,058, agreed to.

CLASS IV.—MINISTER OF JUSTICE. Department of Justice, £735, agreed to. Crown Law Office, £2,275, agreed to. Patent Office, £145, agreed to. Supreme Court, £8,635.

Mr. PEACOCK inquired why the Deputy-Registrar at Auckland received less salary than other Deputy-Registrars at the centres of population.

Mr. TOLE said he would look into the varia-

tion in salary referred to.

Mr. CONOLLY said it would be found that this officer had not been so long in the service as others.

Mr. SAMUEL drew attention to the small salary—£375—paid to the Registrar at New Plymouth. Besides being Registrar, he was also District Judge, sitting at New Plymouth, Hawera, Patea, Wanganui, and Palmerston North, and also Resident Magistrate, sitting at New Plymouth, Waitara, and Opunake, and Native Trust Commissioner for the district; and the salary was not sufficient to command respect. The officer in question was a barrister and solicitor, and was universally esteemed and respected. Yet, whilst the other four District Judges in the colony got from £650 to £900 a year, and thirteen Resident Magistrates who were not professional men at all got over £500, this gentleman received only £375.

Mr. TOLE said he recognized the disparity referred to, and would give the subject his consideration during the recogn

sideration during the recess. Vote, £8,635, agreed to.

Bankruptcy, £3,150.

Mr. SAMÜEL hoped the Government would look into the matter, and see if the colony was not losing something over this expendi-

Sir J. Vogel

ture. He did not see why it should do so, and considered that the creation of paid Gowenment officers to administer debtors' estates for the benefit of creditors only was unwise and unfair to the community.

Mr. CONOLLY thought the expenditure was

fully recouped by fees. Vote, £3,150, agreed to.

District, Resident Magistrates', and Wardens' Courts, £48,597.

Mr. COWAN brought under notice the circumstance that the Resident Magistrate at Invercargill received less than similar officers at Clyde, Oamaru, and other places, where the business was not half so great. He asked that at any rate the £75 travelling allowance should be added to and reckoned as part of the salary, so that when this officer retired, as he would soon be entitled to do, his pension should be calculated on the average amount of salary for his last three years of service.

Mr. TOLE promised to consider the matter.

Mr. SEDDON called the attention of the

Mr. SEDDON called the attention of the Minister to the fact that no provision was made for the police officer who had to undertake the duties of clerk at Stafford. There was a great anomaly in the travelling allowances to officers in this department. The allowances were given in proportion to salary, although the lowest-paid officer had to pay as much for travelling expenses as the highest-paid, and some officers' travelling allowances amounted to as much as their salaries.

Mr. TOLE said provision would be made on the supplementary estimates for the police officer referred to. He admitted there were great anomalies in the system of travelling allowances, which required careful attention. With regard to the Resident Magistrate at Clyde, he had agreed to commute his allowance for £450. Last year it amounted to £700 under the regulations.

Mr. FULTON said the large amount paid to the Magistrate at Clyde suggested the advisability of appointing two Magistrates for that district.

Vote, £48,597, agreed to.

Criminal prosecutions, £11,000, agreed to. Fecs and expenses on inquests, £3,000,

Miscellaneous, £3,350, agreed to.

Prisons, £36,378.

Mr. W. D. STEWART wished to know why in Auckland there were two Chief Warders, whereas in all the other centres of population there was only one. He understood that one of these was appointed unnecessarily.

Mr. TOLE said one of these had been dismissed from the service at Dunedin, but had been reinstated, and sent to the Auckland Gaol

as being the next largest gaol.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN would like the Minister of Justice to take a note of the fact that the matron at the Addington Gaol only got £60 a year, whereas other matrons were receiving £80 in gaols where there was much less work to do.

Mr. TOLE would take a note of the matter. Mr. W. D. STEWART pointed out that a stranger had been appointed to the charge of the Lyttelton Gaol over the head of officers

who had been long in the service.

Mr. TOLE said that this was a most competent officer, who had had fifteen or sixteen years' experience in some of the principal gaols in England, and he understood there was no one in the colony so fitted for the appointment as he was.

Mr. W. D. STEWART thought it would foster discontent among the officers if deserving men had strangers appointed over their heads.

Mr. TOLE said the Government were bound to get the best men they could for the service, and not always simply adhere to a hard-andfast rule of promotion, which might not result in securing the most competent officer.

Vote, £36,378, agreed to.

Class IX.—Minister for Native Affairs. Native Department, £3,535, agreed to. Native Land Court, £14,693, agreed to. Miscellaneous services, £83, agreed to.

CLASS X.—MINISTER OF MINES. Mines Department, £2,258, agreed to. Miscellaneous, £19,050, agreed to.

CLASS XII.—MINISTER OF DEFENCE. Militia and Volunteers, £26,856.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked whether arrangements would be made for holding the annual competition at Christchurch.

Mr. BALLANCE understood that it had been arranged that the competition should be held

at Wellington.

Mr. SHRIMSKI would move that the item for the prize-firing should be struck out. Southern competitors could not afford the time and expense of coming to Wellington, and the Minister had been memorialized to divide the money.

Mr. BALLANCE said it would be decidedly inconvenient and inadvisable to divide the vote this year. He would take steps to ascertain what the views of the Volunteers were with

regard to dividing the vote in future.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD said Christchurch was the most convenient place for holding the com-

petition.

Vote, £26,856, agreed to.

Armed Constabulary, £96,042.

Mr. O'CONOR asked if the Minister of Defence would have any objection to restoring the rank of inspectors and sub-inspectors to those who had been disrated to the ranks of sergeants and sergeants-major. Their past services entitled them to this rank, and they would be glad to have it restored to them without the

Mr. BALLANCE had the question under consideration, and he thought it desirable, if possible, to restore to them their former titles. They considered that they had lost caste by losing their titles-that it was a social degradation. He quite sympathized with them, and if he could restore to them their former titles he

Mr. SHRIMSKI said there was an officer in

his district who had been a public servant for thirty years, and by industry and careful attention to his duties he had become an Inspector. Suddenly he was reduced, not only in pay, but in uniform, and it was a degradation not only to himself, but to his family. He hoped the Minister would see his way to restore to thesemen their former titles.

Mr. DUNCAN asked whether the Minister was aware that grievances existed in many of the Otago stations, chiefly Dunedin. It appeared that a good deal of favouritism was

shown.

[HOUSE.]

Mr. BALLANCE had seen anonymouscharges preferred against Dunedin officers. He could not say that he attached much importance to them; but further inquiry would be made.

Mr. LEVESTAM would like to know wherethe increase commenced and where it ended in the service.

Mr. BALLANCE could not give particulars. Of course, both character and long service were taken into account.

Mr. LEVESTAM wished to know whether, if the honourable gentleman found that was not so, he would get it altered. He (Mr. Levestam) understood that after ten years' service therewas no increase

Mr. BALLANCE.—Yes. Vote, £96,042, agreed to. Field Force, £56,739, agreed to. Stores and magazines, £3,184.

Mr. HATCH would like an explanation of the amounts paid to magazine-keepers, which varied from £5 to £183. Generally, in the South, the magazines were under the Corporations, and he wished to know if these amounts represented rent.

Mr. BALLANCE said in some instances an officer had special charge of a magazine and was paid a salary for it, while in other instances the magazine-keeper performed other duties and was merely paid an addition to his salary.

Vote, £3,184, agreed to.

Miscellaneous services, £606, agreed to.

CLASS XIII.-MINISTER OF LANDS AND MINES.

Crown Lands Department, £21,754.

Mr. COWAN understood that the Chief Surveyor now occupied the position of Commissioner of Crown Lands, and wished to know if he received the salary of Commissioner in addition, as the full salary was voted.

Mr. BALLANCE said the Chief Surveyor received his own salary, with a small addition -about £50-for acting as Commissioner. The estimates were made up before the change took

Mr. BEVAN would like an explanation of the item, "Land Officer, Jackson's Bay," the nature of the duties of the office, and the necessity for its continuance.

Mr. BALLANCE said the officer had other duties to perform, as he was also Resident Magistrate and Receiver of Gold Revenue.

Mr. HATCH wished to know if it was the

fact that a person in the Rabbit Department had been appointed Inspector of Forests. He thought the Ranger might have fulfilled the duties

Mr. BALLANCE said that the Inspector of Forests had been paid a salary of £250 a year, but the present officer only received £100 a year.

Vote, £21,754, agreed to.

Miscellaneous, £10,963.
Mr. DUNCAN would like to know from the Minister of Lands if they intended to continue these Waste Lands Boards. In Otago the Lands Board was anything but satisfactory. He trusted some change would be made at an

He trusted some change would be made at an early date. He would like to have the assurance of the Premier that such would be the case.

Mr. BALLANCE replied that this was a question of local government, and must be considered in connection with the proposals generally of the Government. They did not intend, of course, in passing the estimates, to make changes in the constitution of the Lands Boards.

Vote, £10,963, agreed to. Coal Fields, £200, agreed to. Mines, £10,500, agreed to. Survey Department, £108,852.

Mr. COWAN asked whether the Chief Surveyor at Invercargill would be paid full salary in both capacities of Chief Surveyor and Crown Lands Commissioner.

Mr. BALLANCE said that officer would only be paid one salary. The amalgamation of offices had taken place since the estimates were printed.

Vote, £108,852, agreed to.

CLASS XIV.—COLONIAL TREASURER. Rates on Crown and Native lands, £60,000, agreed to.

GOVERNMENT INSURANCE DEPARTMENT. Vote, £40,369, agreed to.

Public Trust Office Account. Vote, £4,170, agreed to.

CLASS XI.—MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS. Working Railways, £706,000.

Mr. W. WHITE asked if it was not possible to effect an amalgamation among the engineering departments. The engineering was divided into a needless number of departments, and amalgamation would be an advantage. There were three sets of engineers in the South Island.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON thought it necessary and advisable to amalgamate the two engineering branches, but not the locomotive parts of the business.

Mr. W. WHITE asked, how soon would inde-

pendent Boards of Inquiry be appointed?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said there had been no possible chance of doing anything yet, but as soon as the session was over he would look into it, and see what could be done.

into it, and see what could be done.

Mr. W. WHITE asked if it was intended to provide proper accommodation for gatekeepers.

e proper accommodation for gatekeep
Mr. Hatch

He understood they were now kept out at all hours and in all weathers without any shelter

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said in one or two cases shelter had been provided; but it was found that the privilege was abused, as the men kept under shelter and neglected their duty; so the shelter was taken away.

Mr. W. WHITE said that in the case the honourable gentleman referred to a full inquiry would satisfactorily prove that the man was not to blame. The men could discharge their duty better if shelter were provided; and if they neglected their duty there was the usual remedy of dismissal. But they ought to be given shelter.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the particular case the honourable gentleman referred to had been considered in the House.

Mr. W. WHITE did not know when it had come up in the House.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said a question had been put to him on the subject, and he had answered it.

Mr. BROWN asked if it would not be better to have the permanent-way under the supervision of the Public Works Department. There should be only one department—those who made the railways could certainly repair them. As it was now, there were duplicate Engineers, duplicate Inspectors, and so on, and there was a very large amount of unnecessary correspondence between the two departments in the case of every little job. One department had to authorize and find funds, and the other did the work. He thought the permanent-way could very well be placed under the Public Works Department, thus saving a divided responsibility and getting more economical management.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said under the present system of management the change could not take place, because there would be divided responsibility, which would probably lead to endangering the lives of the public.

Mr. LEVESTAM saw some items increased
—"Maintenance," for instance, in every case.
Was that with a view to paying the men for
Good Friday and Christmas Day?

Mr. E. RICHALDSON said these estimates were printed long before the question had been

raised in the House.

Mr. W. WHITE asked if provision would be made on the supplementary estimates to pay the men for holidays.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the permanentway men, platelayers, labourers, and others

would be paid out of this vote.

Mr. W. WHITE said he understood the men could not be spared on ordinary holidays. Would they get other days in lieu of those days?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the matter would be gone into, and some arrangements made as to when the different classes of men could take holidays. It was quite impossible to let off the bulk of the men on public holidays, as those were the days on which the railways were busiest.

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Mr. W. WHITE asked if the men would in any case get the number of days they were entitled to

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the question would be gone into carefully, and the best arrangements made for the men consistent with the efficiency of the service. In any case the men would get what they were entitled to.

Vote, £706,000, agreed to. Government domains, £1,200, agreed to. Public buildings, £28,700, agreed to. Miscellaneous services, £4,760, agreed to. Progress reported.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past two o'clock a.m.

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, 5th November, 1884.

First Reading — Third Reading — Cock-fighting at Marsden—Annexation and Federation—Consolidated Stock Bill — Land Bill — Officers of the Council — Consolidated Stock Bill — Municipal Corporations Bill — Beet-root Sugar Bill — New Zealand Loan Bill—Property-Tax Bill.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READING. Native Land Alienation Restriction Bill.

THIRD READING. Life Assurance Policies Bill.

· COCK-FIGHTING AT MARSDEN. The Hon. Mr. WILSON desired to call the attention of the Government to the decision given by the Resident Magistrate at Greymouth in relation to the recent cock-fighting case at Marsden, and to move, That, in the opinion of this Council, some inquiry should be made or further proceedings taken. He had some days ago called attention to an infraction of the law in this matter, and he had noticed in the morning paper of that day the following telegram from Greymouth, dated the

4th November :-"Nine persons were charged at the Resident Magistrate's Court this morning with aiding and abetting cock-fighting at Marsden on the 7th of October. Counsel for the defence raised several technical objections, one of which was held to be fatal, and the case was dismissed. The Magistrate commented in severe terms upon the case, and hoped that the disgrace and exposure would prove sufficient to prevent any further exhibitions of the kind. He directed that no further proceedings should be taken in the matter."

He had been furnished with a number of papers circulating in that district, and found that in them there were articles from day to day deprecating this prosecution; it was treated with all ridicule, and there were such phrases this could not be a common practice, or one as these used: "We have not a word to say in generally indulged in. The Legislature should

defence of what is called an amusement," and in another place it was stated to be a very trivial infraction of the law, and throughout a hope was expressed that the prosecution would fail. He had also been furnished with information—which he was not allowed to make use of, but which he had every confidence was reliable—to the effect that this was a common practice there; and that it had been practically connived at by the police there could be no doubt at all. He had a letter which stated that this cock-fighting on the 7th of October was perfectly well known long beforehand. The head of the police was aware of it, and had appointed only one man to watch what took place. The thing was perfectly public. There was a large entertainment in the evening, when fifty or sixty people—called the respectable people of the district—were present, and it was looked upon as a creditable performance. He had also heard that since this prosecution had been commenced the practice had been repeated, and, when the attention of the police had been called to it, the Inspector had said, "Oh, I am not going to bother about it; the Superintendent has been told of it, and I do not intend to take any steps." When he had raised this question in the Council on a previous day, he had been laughed at. He did not consider it was a laughing matter at all. He considered that it was the most brutal exhibition that could take place. He was also informed that it was of frequent occurrence on Sundays; and that showed how general it had become. That being so, his object was to have an assurance from the Hon. the Colonial Secretary that the matter would be inquired into. Evidently, though the Magistrate might have done his duty in dismissing the case on technical peints, he had no authority whatever to direct the police to take no further proceedings. He (Mr. Wilson) hoped his honourable friend would teach the Magistrate a very sharp lesson, and tell him that it was not for him, in cases of this kind, to direct that no further proceedings should be taken, but, on the contrary, instead of giving effect to technical objections, to direct the laying of fresh informations. certain class of practitioners attended these Courts, and in any case of difficulty they would take care to raise technical points, and the Magistrate, being afraid to trust his own judgment, dismissed the case. That was a common practice. Such cases ought not to be dismissed at all, but the Magistrate should direct fresh informations to be laid. It was his plain duty as a Magistrate not to dismiss the case on the ground that the informations were bad, but to direct fresh informations to be laid. He moved the motion.

The Hon. Mr. BONAR thought it only right to say that the thing could not have been of a very public character, for, though living on the West Coast at the time, he had heard nothing about it until it was brought forward in the Council. People generally heard, in small places, of all that was going on; and therefore be very careful in passing censure or comments on the actions of Magistrates in the discharge of their duty. Honourable members were not in a position to know what reasons the Magistrate had for acting as he did. Honourable members probably had not forgotten the case of the woman Angélique Therasse, in which the Legislature interfered - the Minister of Justice hurrying to the gaol to release her on a Sunday—only to find afterwards that he was wrong and the Magistrate right, the woman being guilty, and a bad character. That case should be a warning to them not to impugn the conduct of the Magistrate until they had all the facts before them.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE thought the object of the resolution was to enable both sides of the question to be heard. It did not impugn the conduct of the Magistrate in any way whatever. The case had been referred to in the newspapers, and he thought the reports were quite sufficient to show that further in-

quiry was needed.

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN said, as a citizen living at the place where this occurrence was said to have taken place, he must emphatically deny that such discreditable things were of He had lived on the frequent occurrence. West Coast for nineteen years, and was pretty well informed of what was going on there; and this was the second time he had ever heard of cock-fighting taking place, the first being some years ago, when the negligence of the police was complained of. He must deny altogether that respectable persons had taken part in this, and, for the credit of the place, he hoped honourable members would not believe that such was the case. He could assure them this was a pastime which was indulged in by only a few, and not respectable persons either.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN thought it very undesirable that the Council or the Government itself should interfere with Magistrates, or with the course of justice at all, unless under very extraordinary circumstances. Honourable members should not rely on the reports in the newspapers, for he found, according to the newspapers, that he always spoke and voted on the opposite side to that on which he did speak Honourable members should not take up their time on matters based on reports in newspapers. The Government could look after their officers, and if the course of justice were interfered with very undesirable results might ensue. The case had been decided, and it was not for the Council to take any further action. The case referred to by the Hon. Mr. Bonar should be a warning to them to refrain from interfering in matters connected with the administration of justice. In order to dispose of the subject, and to leave it in the hands of the Government, he moved "the previous ques-

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY said it might relieve the mind of the Hon. Mr. Wilson to be informed that inquiries were being made, and they had already received information to the following effect :-

"The Inspector of Police telegraphed that an

Hon. Mr. Bonar

information was laid under section 8, 'Cruelty to Animals Act, 1880,' and dismissed by the Resident Magistrate with a caution, as he held that the information disclosed two offences, the charge being for 'fighting and baiting.' It was clearly proved that the offence was committed, but the Resident Magistrate directed that no fresh information be laid."

The last point was the one on which he desired to get more information. It was a very serious thing to interfere with the course of justice, and in any case they could form no judgment until they had the information on which the Magistrate came to his decision.

The Council divided on the question, "That

this question be now put."

AYES, 12.

Acland Johnston, J. Richmond, J. C. Barnicoat Kohere Scotland Chamberlin Mantell Waterhouse Wilson. Fraser Pharazyn

Noes, 16.

Baillie Peter Reeves Bonar Lahmann Brandon Martin Reynolds Buckley, G. McLean Wigley Buckley, P. A. Peacock Williamson. Dignan

Majority against, 4.

"Previous question" agreed to.

# ANNEXATION AND FEDERATION. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL.—Sir, I thought it would be my duty to move a further ad-journment of this debate, because I was under the impression yesterday that the Council was disposed to think that any such resolution should represent the united opinion of the New Zealand Parliament, and could more conveniently be first debated by the one Chamber, and then transmitted to the other Chamber with a request for its concurrence. I understand now, however, that members are more disposed to pursue the discussion of this subject, and therefore I shall leave some honourable gentleman better informed on the subject than I am to move a further adjournment of the debate. With regard to the resolutions themselves, I have only to say that, in my opinion, they come before us at least twenty-five years too soon, and therefore in any vote on the subject I shall give my voice in that direction which either shelves, or negatives, or disposes summarily of them -I will not say even in a respectful way. I would simply say that submitting such resolutions at this time to a body of adult men of ordinary sense and intelligence is scarcely complimentary to them. I shall leave some other honourable member to initiate any course that would lead to negativing these resolutions, reserving to myself the determination to vote in support of a motion.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—These resolutions are of a very important character, and I think it would be undesirable to come to a decision hastily on them without more debate

upon the subject than we have had yet. am one of those who think, however desirable federation may be as regards the Australian Colonies, that we, from our geographical position, are so situated as to render it undesirable that there should be the same close connection between us and the Australian Colonies as it is desirable that there should be between the Australian Colonies themselves; while I think any action of ours in the direction of federation upon the only terms upon which we could agree to federation would be prejudicial to Australia itself. From the geographical position of the various Australian Colonies it is desirable to have the federal tie between them as close as possible. There is no reason whatever why the armed forces of Australia should not be under one command, and why there should not be the closest Customs union between the various parts of Australia. Indeed, it is evident that, if there be no close Customs union between the several parts of Australia, as those colonies grow in population and influence the very existence of Customs duties upon the border will act injuriously, and will go far to develop inimical feelings between the different colonies. For these reasons I shall be extremely glad to see a close federal tie oxisting between the various colonies. Such a tie would place the Australian Colonies in a position in which they would be really able to defy the aggression of any foreign Power. They would present to foreign Powers a population 50 per cent. greater than that of the American Union at the time it broke off the connection with England; and, with improved means and facilities in the shape of railways, the colonies would be able to gather together an armed force at any one point liable to invasion which would be more than a match for that which any other Power with the difficult means of access which it would possess, and with the great distance at which its base of operations would necessarily be-would be able to bring against it. But, Sir, our circumstances are entirely different.

A federated connection, if it means anything whatever, means a unity of command of armed forces. Now, it would be utterly impossible for us in our position, being several days' journey from Australia, to give over the com-mand of our armed forces to anybody in Australia; and, at the same time, the necessity for a Customs union is not so essential in the case of New Zealand, which in no place borders apon Australia, but has a distinctly marked boundary-line. I think, therefore, these circumstances should be borne in mind in connection with the resolutions which we are now called upon to pass, and that we ought clearly to indicate that our circumstances are such as to render it undesirable that there should be the same close federal connection between us and Australia as it is, in the interests of Australia itself, and in the interests of the British Empire, desirable should exist in Australia. And, Sir, I shall endeavour to give effect to these views by moving an amendment in the resolution marked (e). I propose, between the words "is" and premature," to insert the words, "so far as

New Zealand is concerned;" and then to add the following words: "the geographical position of New Zealand requiring that the federal connection between New Zealand and Australia should be less close than that between the various Australian Colonies." The resolution will then read as follows:-

Federation.

"That the establishment of such a Federal Council as is proposed in the Convention's draft Bill is, so far as New Zealand is concerned, premature, the geographical position of New Zealand requiring that the federal connection between New Zealand and Australia should be less close than between the various Australian Colonies."

I think that, if these words are added, we may omit the two concluding resolutions, leaving it to the Imperial Act, should one be passed, to indicate what means are to be taken to give effect to the resolutions, while reserving for New Zealand its freedom of action, although providing for the closest and most intimate union with Australia, short, however, of federal con-nection. I propose this amendment on the resolution thinking that it is called for by the circumstances of the case. I think it is extremely desirable that so far as Australia is concerned there should be federation. I only wish that I could believe that the federation of Australia was immediately practicable, but I am fain to confess that I do not believe such is the case. The feeling between the colonies is not of that close and friendly relation which is essential prior to the various colonies entering into federation. I cannot think that the country is ripe for federation, because it is not A Customs union ripe for a Customs union. should, I think, precede federation. An amend-ment similar to the one I propose will probably be brought forward in the other branch of the Legislature, and it seems to me so reasonable that I anticipate that the resolutions carried in the two Houses will be very much to the same efféct.

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—I would very much rather see the resolutions negatived altogether. I do not see what we have to do with an island 2,100 miles away from New Zealand. Our interests lie in a totally different direction, —in our adjacent islands; and yet not a word is said about them in these resolutions. Why should we look to New Guinea? We have no quarrel with France; and what have we to do with the question? The honourable gentleman says "Convicts;" but there are convict settlements in other parts of the world. At Puntos d'Arenas, at the western mouth of the Straits of Magellan, there is a Chilian penal settlement; numbers of the convicts escape into the Indian territory and then pass into Buenos Ayres, but the people there do not go into fits like the Convention. Again, there is a convict settlement of Brazilians on an island in the Atlantic; but the English and American Governments do not protest against them. This fuss about récidivistes is perfectly ridiculous. If the convicts go to Australia it would be possible to pass stringent laws to make them work upon the roads, if they come ashore without 886

proper papers. In New South Wales, where they are exposed to the visits of these convicts, they seem to be averse to sanctioning the Convention proposals; and even in Queensland they think it far better to wait and see what the Imperial Government is going to do. I do not object to pay a sum of money to a hospital or to something of that kind, but I object to pay money for the annexation of New Guinea, which is 2,100 miles from here. I see, also, that we are going to give them a man-of-war. I suppose we shall have to pay £20,000 for that. I hope the Council will negative these resolutions altogether; but, if not, I think we should accept the resolution of the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—I think it is desirable, though I do not profess to be able to discuss the question as it ought to be discussed, to say that I think there is another side to the question that should be placed before the Council before they throw out such resolutions as these. The Hon. Mr. Waterhouse has said that a Customs union would be advisable; and no doubt it would be.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE. - In Australia

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—Yes, and in New Zealand too. I think it would be greatly to our interests, and to the interests of our trade, if we had a Customs union in conjunction with the Australian Colonies, and an equal Customs tariff. It would clear many difficulties out of the way of commerce. But, before that is come to, we shall have to get nearer to each other's tariff, and I think we shall do that before long. Of course Victoria has a much higher tariff than we have, and New South Wales has a very low tariff. But New South Wales has for a long time been doing what we did-that is, living on its land revenue, and using it for ordinary expenditure. So long as they can get any land revenue, no doubt they will keep clear of taxation; but the time is coming on them, as it came upon ourselves, when the land revenue will decrease, and they will be obliged to bring in a tariff more in accord with those prevailing in the other colonies. And, when that is the case, we may get gradually to a Customs union, which would be of great benefit to us as well as to the Australian Colonies. I do not look for it before that time. With regard to a Federal Council, I myself should be very greatly opposed to the Council interfering with our internal affairs. But there are certain questions which the Federal Council could legislate upon in the common interest of all, without impairing our own legislation in any way. It would be an advantage in some cases to have representations made by a united Council. With regard to what my honourable friend has said about the forces being under one command, I would say the enemy we have to fear when England might be at war with any other country is such vessels as the "Alabama," which might come to levy contribu-tions; and I myself believe that if New Zealand would join in with the Australian Colonies and pay so much to support their war-ships, as vessels would have to come round the corner

Hon. Captain Fraser

of Western Australia, it would be easy for the colonial war-ships to intercept them. This might be done without great difficulty, and would be of great advantage, so far as the Colony of New Zealand is concerned. For a moderate amount we could in this way protect ourselves from such ships as the "Alsbams." An honourable gentleman also saked An honourable gentleman also asked what we had to do with convicts. Surely, we have a great deal to do with convicts coming to these Islands. The honourable gentleman could surely remember a time when the inhabitants of the Colony of Victoria rose en masse against England sending her convicts as near neighbours, and insisted upon stopping them; so that it could hardly be expected that they would stand quietly by and see French convicts deported close to their shores. I am glad to see that the strong representations made have been the means of inducing the French Government to modify its views regarding the deporting of convicts. This is one of the questions with which a Federal Council could deal with great advantage, and there are also many others which might be mentioned, without the Council interfering with our internal concerns. I should be strongly against any interference with the management of our affairs; but I think we may safely pass the resolutions. I am not one of those who want New Zealand to hold an isolated position, or think that we should sit here quietly by ourselves, and wait till the day of difficulty arrives, when we should be glad to appeal to our neighbours who had made provision for defence in time of peace. Quies is not prevailing as one would like to see it in the Old Country, and we might well make a little provision in time of peace, so as to be ready for any emergency that may arise. It can be done for a small amount, and I think we can well spare that small amount for the purpose of obtaining a common advantage.

The Hon. Mr. G. BUCKLEY.—I intend to

The Hon. Mr. G. BUCKLEY.—I intend to vote for the resolutions. I do not think they would do any harm in the meantime, and I think it would be a mistake, if joint action were taken by the other Australasian Colonies, that we should remain in an isolated position. I agree with the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse that the question of federal union may be a question for years to come, but circumstances may occur which will hasten it on sooner than we anticipate. The amendment of the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse would, I think, to a certain extent indicate that we wish to take up as isolated position, and for that reason I shall vote against the amendment, and for the resolutions as they stand.

The Hon, the SPEAKER.—The Council will now take the resolutions seriatim.

Resolutions (a), (b), (c), and (d) agreed to. Resolution (e).

The Council divided on the Hon. Mr. Water house's amendment.

AYES, 19.

Acland Dignan
Barnicoat Fraser
Chamberlin Grace

Hart Johnston, J. Nurse Pascock Richmond, J. C. Wigley Pharazyn Scotland Williamson Pollen Waterhouse Wilson. Reeves

Nors, 11.

Baillie Buckley, P. A. McLean Bonar Peter Kohere Brandon Lahmann Reynolds. Buckley, G. Martin

Majority for, 8.

Amendment agreed to.

Resolution (f).
The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.—I think the Council will see that, having adopted the last clause, it may be regarded as the rejection of the scheme of a Federal Council, and that further resolutions having reference to that Council would be out of place altogether. I think, the Council having gone so far as to accept the preceding sections of the resolution, and having decided that the colony ought not to take any part in the Federal Council, its business with the Federal Council, so to speak, ceases, and the resolution should have no further reference to it. It appears to me that there is a fallacy in the use of the word "federation" in this connection. There can be no federation in any true sense of the word between colonies which are not sovereign States, but are mere dependencies of the British Empire, and which can have no external relations of their own independent of the Mother-country. In these circumstances there can be no federation which could be properly so called. I think, therefore, that, we having gone sufficiently far in this direction, the remaining resolutions may be laid aside. I will not move that this section of the resolution be expunged; it will be sufficient to negative it.

The Council divided on the question, "That Resolution (f) be agreed to."

AYES, 11.

Baillie Kohere Peter Bonar Reynolds Lahmann Buckley, G. Martin Wigley. \* Buckley, P. A. McLean

Noes, 20.

Acland Hart Reeves Barnicoat Henderson Richmond, J. C. Brandon Johnston, J. Scotland Chamberlin Nurse Waterhouse Dignan Williamson Peacock Fraser Pharazyn Wilson. Grace Pollen

Majority against, 9.

Resolution negatived.

On the question, That the motion as a

whole, as amended, be agreed to,

The Hon. Mr. BONAR said,—I regret very much the action the Council has taken to-day. I think it a pity that New Zealand should set herself up in an isolated position apart from the other colonies. I think it would be very much more to our interest to go with the other colonies in the matter of federation. It could

do no harm to New Zealand to associate itself in federation with the Australian Colonies. It would not put us in a special position as regards the other colonies, for New Zealand always has been, and always will be, able to hold her own in connection with any federation that may take place. I therefore think that it is very regrettable that on such an occasion as this—really the establishment of a new Empire in the southern part of the world—we should be the one part of the colonies to stand out. The time may be a little early, but I think that, in matters of common interest, it behoves us to band ourselves together and to take a decided stand. I think nothing could be more disastrous than allowing convicts from other countries to come within reach of our shores, with possibilities of coming to this coun-I myself and many other honourable members can recollect the decided stand taken by New South Wales and Victoria against the influx of convicts. The whole of the colonists rose as one man and prevented them landing. It cost years of trouble, expense, and exceptional legislation, and it was not until the bulk of them were hanged that they got rid of the convict element there. Let us take care so to act as to prevent an incursion of French or other convicts from the islands of the Pacific: and it is because I feel that we should most earnestly guard against that I regret the Council has taken up the isolated position we have taken in dealing with these resolutions to-day.

The Hon. Dr. GRACE.—I do not think the position we have assumed is a position of isolation. Nobody seeks, by the alteration of these resolutions, to lay down any proposition, except that our relation to this particular matter is not like that of the other colonies. merely defined our exact position in respect to this matter, and I consider that we have gone a long way towards strengthening the chance of this federation being given effect to in a practical shape. I do not think anything will be left undone by us which could tend to the furtherance of the objects the Hon. Mr. Bonar has referred to. Our only desire is to show that in our legislation we are a practical people dealing with practical things in a liberal yet com-

mon-sense way, as they come before us.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—I quite agree with the Hon. Dr. Grace. The effect of the changes we have made in these resolutions will not be to weaken the federated action of these colonies, but rather to strengthen it in Australia as distinct from New Zealand. It is quite clear that we can only enter into a federal union with Australia upon terms which would render the federal tie looser than is desirable in the interests of Australia itself; whereas it must be to our interest as New Zealanders to see a strong federation in Australia. The circumstances of this colony are so different that it is out of the question that the federal action should be the same in all respects here as there. This is no new view. I was lately struck by an article in the London Times in which attention was drawn to the distinction between New Zealand and Australia, and acknowledging that, owing to its geographical position, the connection would naturally not be so close between New Zealand and Australia as it was desirable it should be between the Australian Colonies themselves. The Hon. Mr. Bonar was mistaken when he said we should stand alone in our action. The Legislature of New South Wales has gone far beyond what we have done, and has decided to negative for the present the adoption of the resolutions arrived at in the late Conference.

Motion agreed to.

# CONSOLIDATED STOCK BILL.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—The object of this Bill is to carry into effect a portion of the policy enunciated by the Colonial Treasurer in his Financial Statement. It has two purposes to serve. The first is to get rid of what I believe is considered nowadays the very great burden of a sinking fund; and the second, by the conversion of stock, to obtain money, if possible, at a much less rate of interest than we are paying now. This measure, when introduced into the other branch of the Legislature, was received with much favour, and I am sure that it will meet with the same favour here. On looking at the Financial Statement, which I invite honourable members to consider carefully, it is found that the amount of money which is sent from the colony yearly for interest and Sinking Fund is something enormous-something over £1,500,000; and about £250,000 of that goes to Sinking Fund. This is a very serious burden on the taxpayers of the colony; and I think no honourable gentleman will dispute the fact that, if we are to continue our public works and railways, we must not impose greater burdens on the taxpayers than are necessary. By the provisions of this Bill honourable members will observe that we propose to convert our debentures into bonds bearing a less rate of interest, as opportunity may arise. It is not intended to increase the indebtedness of the colony as from the 31st March last. Beyond that, all the rest of the Bill is mere machinery, similar to the provisions of the Act passed in 1877. I do not know that I can give honourable gentlemen more information on the matter than is contained in the Financial Statement. honourable gentlemen to the schedule of the Bill, from which they will see that we have nineteen Loan Acts in operation; and, if we are to effect the great purposes for which the public works policy was intended, the sooner we place our finances on a firm and sure basis the better. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—This Bill has not been in the hands of honourable members many hours, and they have had to consider it at the same time as they have had to consider and master a number of other Bills brought forward simultaneously, which are on the Order Paper for consideration to day. I have, however, devoted as much attention to the mastering of this Bill as the time at my

Hon. Mr. Waterhouse

disposal enabled me to do, and I will proceed to give the Council the benefit of some of my investigations into it. The Bill undoubtedly has the object in view which the Hon. the Colonial Secretary has stated, that of enabling the colony to borrow an amount of seven and a half millions sterling, as stated in the Financial Statement of the Colonial Treasurer, without thereby increasing the burden of interest which at the present time it has to pay. I have always looked upon this Sinking Fund as something which eventually, sooner or later, would have to be reassumed by the colony; but I hoped that the resumption of this Sinking Fund would be postponed to as late a period as possible, in order that it might enable us to surmount the financial difficulties which, I am sure, as the result of our borrowing policy, we shall sooner or later find ourselves involved in. But the matter has come before us rather sooner than we anticipated, and it is for Parliament to decide whether it will sanction the proposal now made. In the Financial Statement the Colonial Treasurer stated that the result of the adoption of his suggestions would be that we might borrow seven and a half additional millions without additional annual charge in respect of interest. Now, Sir, those seven and a half millions represent the interest and Sinking Fund paid at the present time, and the capitalization of the amount on which Sinking Fund is still to be paid. There would be practically three millions, representing accrued Sinking Fund, which would fall into the hands of the Colonial Treasurer in some eight or ten years, and some four and a half millions, representing the capitalized value of the saving on interest. Now, I want to call the attention of the Council to the mode in which this is done, and the way in which this money is appropriated; and I must ask honourable gentlemen, if they have not gone carefully through the proposition, to follow me, with the Bill in their hands, because the proposition appears to me to be of a most novel and, I think, most objectionable character. In clause 6 there is provision made for the creation of stock to the amount of the annual increase of the Sinking Fund, that is, of the amount of four and a half millions, and that is inde-pendent of the amount referred to in clauses 3 and 4. This stock is to be created, and arrangements are made for its disposal, which, practically, as is shown in the 3rd subsection, will be as the Colonial Treasurer directs. The two previous subsections may be disregarded, because the proviso contains these very comprehensive words: "or otherwise as the Colonial Treasurer may direct." Then, this section further provides that, as this stock is created and disposed of, the proceeds shall go into the Public Account and form part of the Consolidated Fund. Now, if honourable members will give careful consideration to clause 10 they will get some additional light on the subject. According to that clause, until this stock is created the Colonial Treasurer has the power to issue short-dated debentures, which he may dispose of in such manner as he may think

proper, and in such amounts as he may think right; and of course the proceeds of these shortdated debentures would go into the Consolidated Fund. Practically, therefore, the opera-tion of this is that the Colonial Treasurer will have at his disposal debentures to the amount of four and a half millions, which he can sell in such sums as he thinks proper, and with the proceeds from time to time feed the Consolidated Fund. This four and a half millions the Colonial Treasurer will have in his disposal, and with it from time to time he may meet the deficiency which may spring up between our revenue and our expenditure. Be-fore I had this Bill in my hands I wondered how we were to pay the deficiency on our last year's revenue, and more especially how the deficiency from the decrease in the property-tax was to be provided for. The answer is here. The Colonial Treasurer has these short-dated debentures, which he can sell out at any time, and with which he can feed the Consolidated Fund. That this is the true explanation is further evident from the 9th clause, which provides that, after the four and a half millions of stock have been disposed of, the proceeds of that stock shall go, first of all, in paying off debentures which have been issued by the Treasurer, and which the Treasurer will issue to meet deficiencies in the manner I have stated; and secondly, after these debentures have been paid, then the balance is to go into the Public Works Fund. Here is a gigantic fund created, to last for many years, whereby the Treasurer will be assisted to tide over his financial difficulties, by going to the money-market and selling portions of the funds at his disposal. I have no hesitation whatever in saying that never was such a proposition submitted to the Legislature before. It is a proposition in anticipation of more deficits in the revenue, and provides means by which these deficits may be met. Honourable members must, in this matter, act according to their own views. To me it appears to be the most dishonest piece of legislation ever proposed to the attention of this Legislature, or any other that I am acquainted with, and I shall satisfy my own conviction, at any rate, by recording my vote in a decided manner against it. Sir, I move, as an amendment, That the second reading of this Bill be made an Order of the Day for this day six months. The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND.—I hope

the Government will allow sufficient time for the consideration of this question, because the Bill has been so short a time before us. It was not in my hands till its second reading was actually moved, and I have not had an opportunity of considering it, having been engaged on the work of the Council since ten o'clock this morning. I move, therefore, That the de-

bate be adjourned.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—I do not think we should, at this stage of the session, go on adjourning Bills from day to day, or we shall presently find that our business is behind that of the other House. It is well known that we

Friday or Saturday, at farthest; and therefore I think the adjournment should be only till this evening, and not till to-morrow. I should have no objection to adjourning the debate till this evening. •

Debate adjourned.

LAND BILL.

On the motion, That this Bill be read a third time,

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND said,—I wish to move to recommit the Bill, for the purpose of reconsidering clauses 34 and 35—the municipal endowment clauses. I think that the Council was somewhat hasty in throwing out those clauses. They are not by any means foreign to the subject of the Bill. As fear was expressed at the time by some honourable gentlemen that we might be entering into engagements with respect to towns in which there was no land whatever that should be affected by these provisions, I call attention to the fact that the clauses limit the power to reserve to lands within the town districts themselves. I am sure great disappointment will arise if these clauses are excluded from the Bill. The question is not a new one. It has been brought up and has fallen through several times, but in no case has it been decided in the negative by the Legislature. As I am informed, we should not be creating a wrong precedent in the introduction of foreign matter into a Bill if these clauses were imported into it. I therefore move, That the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of reconsidering these clauses.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I should

also like to recommit the Bill for the considera-

tion of clause 4.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—I think, looking over the Bill, that clauses 7 and 12 should be reconsidered. I was under the impression that the Bill would not affect any deferred-payment settlers now in occupancy—that it would have no retrospective effect; but, upon further consideration, I think that it is retrospective, and I can easily understand that a transaction pro-bably in the course of completion may be prevented by these clauses from being com-pleted. If the law was in force, and a person failed to pay up his money and get the Crown grant, the clause extending the term to six years would affect him, though he had completed his time under the old Act, and could have had his grant at any moment excepting for this Act of the Legislature. I do not think it was the intention of the Legislature to make it retrospective; it was an oversight, and a few words added to clause 7 will make it clear.
The Hon. Mr. REEVES.—I shall support

the motion for the recommittal of the Bill, as I wish to reintroduce clauses 5 and 6, and strike out the new clauses—"Conditions of the sale of pastoral lands." One reason I have for coming forward to support this is the peculiar and most unfair constitution of the Waste Lands Committee, which, of course, virtually decides in a great measure the status of the Bill. When the Hon. Mr. Robinson and the cannot keep Parliament together later than Hon. Mr. Stevens were discharged from the

Waste Lands Committee of this Council, their places were not filled, as they certainly should have been, by other Canterbury members. The honourable gentleman who moved that their names should be discharged and their places filled by the names of the Hon. Mr. Richmond and the Hon. Captain Fraser, was, I am sure, not at all disposed to do any injustice to Canterbury: nevertheless he, in point of fact, did a very great injustice. I venture to think that, if Canterbury had been represented on the Waste Lands Committee, the clauses which I wish to see reintroduced would not have been struck out. It is a current proverb that the waste land laws of this colony are most various and most complex; and I venture to say that the oldest inhabitants taken from each provincial district, if catechized as to the nature of the laws that prevail in their districts, would not be able to give any intelligent account of them. Consequently, it follows, as a matter of course, that it became absolutely necessary that gentlemen should sit on the Waste Lands Committee representing these several districts. The system which has been tried for the sale of pastoral lands on deferred payment in Canterbury has been proved to be a failure, and has been admitted to be so by the late Minister of Lands, who was evidently desirous of introducing some measure that would be successful for the purpose of settling pastoral lands upon deferred payment. The attempt has failed to bring new settlers on to the land. The lands have fallen into the hands of the neighbouring owners, and have been disposed of at a great sacrifice to the revenue of the colony, without effecting any satisfactory end. I notice that the opinion of some members of the Waste Lands Committee is that, by introducing improvement clauses and a penalty clause, which have been introduced in this Bill, the system of settlement of pastoral lands on deferred payment will be successful. But I would ask the Council to consider whether, after all the experience of the late Minister of Lands, with all the time he had at his disposal, with all his knowledge of the Canterbury land laws, it is likely that the Waste Lands Committee or this Council could in an hour or two elaborate a scheme for the settlement of these lands that would be successful, when the late Minister of Lands has entirely failed where he was ardently desirous of succeeding. I myself will yield to no man in a desire to see this object carried out, and for that very reason I ask the Council to recommit this Bill and to reinstate those clauses, so that time may be afforded during the recess to frame a scheme that will meet the difficulties of the question, and that is likely to prove a real success; because if we have another failure it postpones indefinitely the time when a successful scheme can be brought in. We could do nothing better than to reinstate those clauses, which will leave the matter open for a better plan to be thought out and brought forward on a future occasion.

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—Sir, it is a rule of the House of Commons that no person directly or indirectly interested in a matter

shall sit on a Committee relating to it. The Hon. Mr. Richmond and myself had no interest whatever one way or the other, except the interest of the colony at large; and, with regard to these two clauses, the honourable gentleman who spoke last has forgotten altogether that it is the law at present, and that we have had very good evidence on the Committee. The Under-Secretary of Lands told us that the law worked very well in both Canterbury and Otago up to the present. it is a very unpleasant thing for runholders in Canterbury and Otago that these clauses should exist, so as to give people any chance of getting upon the land, or to stand "betwixt the wind and their nobility." I say the country will not suffer this sort of thing, and I warn this Country will not suffer this sort of thing. cil not to undo the work done in the interests of the colony at large by the Waste Lands Committee. The people have looked upon this as a great boon, especially to the old settlers of the colony, who have borne the brunt of the battle, and whom it enables to settle their children upon the land. I do trust the good sense of the Council will not allow this great boon, which we have fought for and obtained for the people, to be taken away from them, merely to please two or three people who think the common people should not come

"betwixt the wind and their nobility."
The Hon. Mr. WIGLEY.—I cannot understand the position the Hon. Captain Fraser has taken up. He says that he does not represent any place in particular, but the interests of the country. The appointments to the Committee were very reprehensible. The Committees are supposed to be representative bodies, the members representing various districts, so that they may be able to give information upon the different requirements of the different districts for the consideration of this Council. The honourable member gets up and says that he went there for the interest of the colony at large, and immediately afterwards he votes for a particular clause to be introduced in the Bill by himself. I think that the Canterbury members take up quite as independent a position as he does, and are as desirous for the benefit of the whole of the colony. These clauses, as far as Canterbury is concerned, have been a perfect failure. That is admitted by the late Minister of Lands, as has been stated by the Hon. Mr. Reeves; and yet the members of the Committee try in every way to bring the clauses into force again. The clause repealing the clauses that have been reintroduced was carried unanimously in the other House. I shall support the recommittal of the Bill; but I hope the Hon. Captain Fraser will not arrogate to himself the only virtue in the Council. I must say that when the motion to appoint two members to the Committee was made it was somewhat of a surprise. There were few members present, and at the moment it was not noticed that there were no other Canterbury members on the Committee.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—I would ask the Colonial Secretary to consider whether, as there are so many notices for the reconsidera-

Hon. Mr. Reeves

tion of clauses, it is desirable to recommit the Bill at all. It appears to me that there will be no finality to our legislation if we go on recommitting a Bill to the extent to which it is proposed to recommit this Bill. Every point that has been the subject of discussion in the Council it is now proposed to reopen for reconsideration. However, I leave it to my honourable friend the Colonial Secretary to decide on that point for himself. I am willing to agree with the Hon. Mr. Reeves that there was somewhat of an oversight and a disregard of the special interests of Canterbury in the recent appointment of the two members to take the places of the Hon. Mr. Stevens and the Hon. Mr. Robinson. I am sure that it was quite unintentional, and that it never occurred to any member of the Council that these were the only representatives of the Canterbury District on the Waste Lands Committee; and no local consideration, I am satisfied, influenced the Council in its decision that their places should be filled up by two other honourable members. Inadvertently, however, I am willing to confess, there was an oversight, and it would have been better if we had looked into the matter more closely, and had placed Canterbury members on the Waste Lands Committee, seeing that Canterbury is so inti-mately interested in waste lands legislation. But, in spite of that, the interests of Canterbury were not overlooked, and I believe they were more closely looked after than probably would have been the case had there been no alteration in the constitution of the Committee, inasmuch as, under the circumstances, those gentlemen to whom reference has been made would not have been present at the deliberations of the Committee. There was a very important clause in the Bill as it came from the other branch of the Legislature, which appears to have been overlooked by every person in Canterbury at all interested in pastoral pursuits; and, had it not been for the action of the Waste Lands Committee, it would in all probability have remained in the Bill. It was a provision by which the Canterbury squatters would have been most effectually exposed to having their lands taken from them at any time—that is, their leased lands—without any compensation being paid to them. I dare say the information is new to my honourable friend who comes from the Provincial District of Canterbury; but there is no doubt whatever that the Bill, as it came from the other branch of the Legislature, if passed into law, would have given power to the Minister of Lands for the time being over all the lands leased from the Crown by the squatters in Canterbury by which they might have been withdrawn from sale and subsequently leased to other persons. We saw that that clause had escaped attention, and thought it was calculated to inflict injustice, and we unhesitatingly recommended that the clause should be struck out. I refer to this simply to show that we tried to look after the interests of the Canterbury settlers as well as the interests of other parties. Now, I entirely

differ from my honourable friend Mr. Reeves as regards the working of the system for the sale of pastoral lands upon deferred payments. He states it has been a failure; and that statement may appear to be borne out by the observations which fell in Committee from the Premier and the Secretary of Lands. They both declared that it had been a failure; but, in reply to inquiries, they pointed out simply and emphatically what was the cause of the failure. They said the cause of the failure had been that there had been no provision for improvements inserted, and that the result was that in too many instances the land had passed into the hands of mere dummies, who were instruments in the hands of large landowners; and that it was in this way that the intention of the Legislature in amending the law so as to facilitate the creation of a large body of yeoman proprietors had been defeated. But they at once pointed out that, if the law were amended by the introduction of an improvement provision in the conditions of sale, the objections at present entertained by the department against the system would be removed, and the system might be attended with great advantage. In accordance with what we had every reason to believe was the public desire in the matter, we proposed to give power to make regulations regarding improvements; and we further introduced a clause rendering it penal to make a false declaration, and so guarded the system as entirely to re-move all objections to it. I have not had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Rolleston since the Bill was reported, but I cannot help thinking that, were he acquainted with the changes made by the Committee, he would be in favour of the Bill as recommended by the Committee.

The Hon. Mr. PETER.—I may mention that this clause was struck out by the Waste Lands Committee of the other House, and was reinstated by the Council itself.

The Hon. Mr. ACLAND.—I have no doubt that the Wasto Lands Committee looked into this, and did every justice; but I must make this remark: that, while the Hon. Captain Fraser intimated, as it were, that no Canterbury men ought to be on the Committee, on the ground that no one personally interested ought to be so, I do not know why he supposed that they should be personally interested, though he certainly did think that, by quoting the practice of the House of Commons. His opinion, therefore, is that the Canterbury members had a private interest in it. But I cannot help thinking that I could trace in his speech the fact that he looked at the matter from a provincial point of view, as he mentioned that something would not do for Otago, and, in fact, he looked at it very much as though Otago were the Colony of New Zealand.

The Hon. Mr. BONAR.—I move, That the Bill be recommitted generally.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BÜCKLEY.—I hope the Council will not agree to the recommittal of the Bill generally. It is very difficult to say what if contains, or what will be the effect of the numerous amendments proposed. In the

face of all the alterations spoken of, I should not consent to the recommittal of the Bill generally; but I think it necessary to add\_two or three words to the 4th clause of the Bill, and I trust it may be recommitted on the three or four provisions considered necessary. I may say that since the Bill was introduced I have had no less than fifty amendments put into my hands from people from all over the Suggestions with reference to land tenure of all kinds have been submitted to me for insertion in this Bill. I have not accepted them, and it would be impossible to understand the Bill as a whole if I had done so. I think I had one provision suggested with regard to the codlin moth - something affecting orchards. Certainly the number of amendments was something remarkable.

Motion, That the Bill be recommitted gene-

rally, agreed to.

IN COMMITTEE.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN moved, That the Chairman leave the chair.

The Committee divided.

AYES, 10. Chamberlin Johnston, J. McLean Pharazyn

Pollen Waterhouse  $\overline{\mathbf{W}}$ ilson.

Hart Johnson, G. R.

Fraser

Noes, 19.

Henderson Acland Peter Barnicoat Kohere Reeves Bonar Lahmann Reynolds Buckley, G. Mantell Richmond, J. C. Buckley, P. A. Martin Scotland Dignan Peacock Wigley. Grace

Majority against, 9.

Motion negatived.

Clause 4.—"Land Boards Inquiry Act, 1883," to operate as to previous licenses. Past for-feitures confirmed.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY moved to add the following words: "through insuffi-ciency of the proof of conditions of lease and license, or any conditions of 'The Land Boards Inquiry Act, 1883.'".

The Committee divided on the question,

"That the words be added to the clause."

AYES, 18. Acland Henderson Reeves Reynolds Barnicoat Kohere Scotland Buckley, G. Lahmann Buckley, P. A. Martin Wigley Peacock Williamson Dignan Fraser Wilson.

Noes, 9.

Bonar Johnson, G.R. McLean Johnston, J. Grace Pollen Hart Mantell Richmond, J.C. Majority for, 9.

Amendment agreed to.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN moved, That progress be reported, and leave asked to sit again.

The Hon. Captain FRASER moved, by way of amendment, to omit the words "and leave asked to sit again."

Hon. Mr. P. A. Buckley

The Committee divided on the question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question."

AYES, 19.

Acland Kohore Pollen Barnicoat Lahmann Reeves Bonar Mantell Reynolds Buckley, G. Martin Richmond, J. C. Buckley, P. A. Peacock Wigley Dignan Peter Williamson. Henderson

Noes, 8.

Fraser Johnson, G. R. Waterhouse Grace Johnston, J. Wilson. Hart McLean

Majority for, 11.

Amendment negatived.

Motion negatived.

The Hon. Captain FRASER moved, That progress be reported, and leave asked to sit

The Committee divided.

AYES, 5.

Fraser Johnson, G.R. Wilson. Hart Pollen

Noes, 22.

Acland Johnston, J. Peter Barnicoat Kohere Reeves Bonar Lahmann Reynolds Buckley, G. Mantell Richmond, J.C. Buckley, P.A. Martin Scotland Chamberlin McLean Wigley Dignan Peacock Williamson. Henderson

Majority against, 17.

Motion negatived.

Clause 7.—Repeal of section 9 of "Land Act 1877 Amendment Act, 1879."

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN moved the addition of the following proviso: "Provided that nothing shall affect licenses issued prior to the coming into operation of this Act.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the words be added to the clause."

AYES. 7.

Bonar McLean Pollen Johnson, G. R. Peter Scotland. Mantell

Noes, 21.

Acland Peacock Frascr Barnicoat Hart Reeves Brandon Henderson Reynolds Buckley, G. Johnston, J. Richmond, J. C. Wigley Williamson Buckley, P. A. Kohere Chamberlin Lahmann Dignan Martin Wilson.

Majority against, 14.

Amendment negatived.

The Hon. Mr. REEVES moved, That the following clause be added to the Bill:-

"Sections seventy-five to eighty-five, both inclusive, of 'The Land Act, 1877,' are hereby repealed: Provided that, as regards any pastoral lands sold on deferred payments prior to the passing of this Act, or the purchasers

thereof, such repeal shall not in any way affect | or invalidate the operation of such repealed sections."

The Committee divided on the question, "That the clause be added to the Bill."

#### AYES, 19.

Acland Hart McLean Johnston, J. Barnicoat Peacock Bonar Kohere Peter Buckley, G. Lahmann Reeves Buckley, P. A. Mantell Reynolds Chamberlin Martin Wigley. Dignan

Noes, 8.

Brandon Pollen Grace Richmond Johnson, G. R. Scotland

Williamson Wilson.

Majority for, 11. Clause added. Bill reported.

# OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The Hon. the SPEAKER.—I wish to call the attention of the Council to a statement which appears in the paper this evening that I think concerns this Council. It is there stated—under the heading, "Notes from the Gallery of the House of Representatives "-" Several honourable members complained that again this year the officials of the Council were having their salaries increased." Now, I wish to state to the Council the fact. The fact is that no increase has been granted either to the Clerk or to the Clerk-Assistant of this Council for the last six years, and only one to the Clerk for the last seventeen years. I think it concerns the Council that this imputation should not be made, and votes accordingly influenced under a misconception of the facts. If this Council does not protect its officers I do not know who

# CONSOLIDATED STOCK BILL.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.
The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND.—Although I do not quite share the alarm of the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse, I am bound to say that the Bill as I read it is open to the construction he put on it. The Bill is part of what I must call a very seedy sort of finance; it is the finance of that celebrated character who, having taken up a bill with a renewed acceptance, thanked God he had got rid of that job. We are fulfilling engagements by making other engagements. That is one idea of the matter; but jumbled up with it in the same Bill is a very much larger affair indeed - the inscription of stock. There is a long schedule of eighteen or twenty loans, all of which may be, conceivably, and, if we understand the Treasurer aright in his Financial Statement, very rapidly, converted. If they were so converted there would not perhaps be so much harm in the clause to which I would call attention. The Hon. Mr. Waterhouse did not read the clause out; but I think the Council will see he was almost if not quite justified in the interpretation he put to which I wish to call attention—I do not

affair: "Treasurer may issue seven-years debentures." In the body of the clause is this:-

"Pending the operations for converting loans and creating the stock authorized to be created under the provisions of this Act and the said Act, the Colonial Treasurer may, when so authorized by an Order in Council in that behalf, create debentures to an amount not exceeding in the whole the amount of such stock."

That is the amount of seven and a half millions referred to by the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse. I have not had time to sum up the total balance of these loans, but it must surely amount to a very much larger sum. "Pending the operations"—that may be a very short or a very long time. There is nothing on the face of the Bill, that I have been able to discover, which limits the period. Perhaps the Hon. the Commissioner of Customs, when addressing the Council, will be able to explain this. There is some appearance of a check—and only one—in the issue of these debentures, in the provision that it can only be done by Order in Council. But honourable gentlemen who know the mode of conducting the business in the Executive Council must know that an Order in Council does not mean much more than the word of the Minister who brings the draft order in for signature. Therefore there appears to be, on the face of the Bill, a proposal that the whole of the capital sum of nineteen loans may be issued in short-dated debentures whenever the Colonial Treasurer thinks fit. Of course it is perfectly incredible that use would be made of it to the full extent; but still the Treasurer can have as much as at any moment he wants. That is the case. And I cannot but think—and I would almost say I cannot but hope that, if the Bill passes in this state—and no doubt it must pass—it will blow upon our credit at Home. Considering the condition of our finances at the present time—considering the cheerful lightheartedness of my honourable friend opposite, the economist of the Government; the light heart with which he advances up to his neck, and even over his eyes, into the indebtedness of the colony—considering, I say, that the position of the colony is very little understood here, and is very much misunderstood at Home, it is time the bubble should be burst. If that is the result of this seedy little Bill, I, for one, shall be thankful for it, and would pass it with all my heart if I could be sure of it. I will not trouble the Council with any further remarks; but I felt bound to express my convictions on this most peculiar finance of my honourable friend's. All the laughter of my honourable friend opposite—the syndicate major, as I suppose I may call him—cannot affect my opinion on this matter: all the entangled clauses and mysterious phrases of these dabblers in finance cannot make me believe that this is a right course to pursue.

know whether my interpretation of it is correct. In clause 4 it is provided, "The provisions of the fifth section of the said Act"—that is, the Act of 1877—"shall not apply to the loans or parts of loans guaranteed by the Imperial Government." That 5th section of the Act of 1877 provides that no larger amount of the capital of the inscribed stock shall be given than the amount of the debt or sum exchanged for the inscribed stock. Then, clause 4 of this Bill continues: "but, in the case of the.conversion of the whole or a part of such guaranteed loans, a reasonable addition to the capital or annual charge may be made, commensurate to the importance which the Agents consider to be attachable to the said conversion." Now, it has occurred to me that hitherto these guaranteed loans have always been held in reserve, as a resource to be had recourse to when the exigencies of the colony absolutely required it. This clause clearly contemplates that the loan should be converted, and that the last resource of the colony in such an emergency should be absolutely given up and done away with. If I am right in my construction of that clause of the Bill, if there were no other clause in it than that, I think

this Bill should be rejected.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—I am sorry that a little more time is not given for the purpose of considering such an important Bill as this. It is quite true, as my honourable friend says, that extremely large powers are given in this Bill. But, under the circumstances, large powers must be given for the operation; and, although it is quite true that they have power to borrow very largely on short-dated deben-tures, it is with a view and for the purpose simply of taking up the machinery already in existence and making use thereof. myself, after glancing at the Bill, that, if we had the power of altering this Bill, its scope might be contracted with advantage; but I believe we have not the power of altering the Bill, and therefore we must take it as a whole; and if we accept the principle of the Bill we must pass it. Well, now, the principle of the must pass it. Well, now, the principle of the Bill is this: Every one now has come to the conclusion that, when you are borrowing at the same time, the putting-aside of a Sinking Fund is really no security, because, while you are buying up your own debentures and placing your 1 per cent. to the credit of the Sinking Fund, you at the same time are negotiating for a further loan. So far as that part of the security is concerned, I do not think that the operation is a bad one. But this is no new matter. This subject of the Sinking Fund has been discussed over and over again by Treasurers, with an eye to the accrued Sinking Fund; but no one has had the boldness till now to propose dealing with it. Now, I think it would have been better, had we not been so much pressed, to allow the operation to go on that has been going on for the last few years, taking the Sinking Fund gradually, as the stock. became inscribed; because what is proposed is purely neither more nor less than this: You are borrowing money to pay your Sinking Fund.

You can put no other meaning on it. It is borrowing £244,000 this year in order to pay the Sinking Fund. And, in doing this, you may say that the last nest-egg is gone; and, if you take this, you must place your future loans as you best can. So that, if you accept the principle of this Bill, it is of little use quarrelling with the rest of the Bill itself. It will be purely this: The whole of the Sinking Fund-£2,700,000—will gradually work into the Public Works Fund, and will be reissued, and you will have the same amount of debt that is stated now, with this difference: that at the present time you take the Sinking Fund and make your debt so much less. Now, Sir, to come to the point that the Hon. Mr. Hart took up; and it is really a very important point. I think borrowing with the guaranteed debentures should not be done, and for this reason: I think, while you have so many deposits in the savings-banks, and seeing that there have been certain statements made in the General Assembly, such as created a run on these savings-banks, you are compelling your bankers to keep a reserve fund in order to meet any run that might take place on these deposits. If the Government would only take care to keep these debentures in London, and invest them in savings-bank funds, lying there to meet any emergency, they could borrow money at any time on the Imperial-guaranteed debentures without any trouble whatever. It is purely a matter of interest, and they would always be at the command of the Government to raise money, without disturbing. the commerce of the country. Therefore, if the £800,000 were kept intact and converted in that way, it would be available in case of need at any time, as in connection with these short loans that the colony has been in the habit of borrowing from different people, and which are suddenly called up when the loans. become due—I refer to the case in which a loan had been got from the Bank of New South Wales, and the colony was called upon to pay £500,000. This was done with those debentures, and money was got without any trouble. I mention this in favour of the argument. I hold that the colony, while it is taking money from people, should have a reserve to fall back upon. Therefore it would be better to excise clause 4, if that could be done. We see that other loans have been floated. New South Wales had three and a floated. half millions, which is now at 94, and I have no doubt it will soon go up higher. So that we can see that, at the time when money becomes. very cheap, a very favourable operation might take place, and, instead of making this inscription of stock, it would be advisable to await a favourable opportunity, which always occurs at certain times. However, as I have said, if you accept the principle of borrowing money to pay the Sinking Fund, we may as well accept the Bill as it is.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I wish to

say one or two words in reply to the honourable gentleman who has just sat down. I used to be under the delusion that I was the poores.

Hon. Mr. Hart

financier in the Council, but I find I am completely eclipsed by my honourable friend. I should have thought that, as an old banker, no one would have known more about these matters than himself. One is amused to hear the honourable gentleman complain about pressing on the business of the session at this particular time. Not very long ago he told me that he was very merciful to me, because he supposed I did not exercise some control over the business of the Council; but, while I have svery reason to be grateful to the Council for its indulgence to me, at the same time I have a duty to perform, and the honourable gentleman understands perfectly well that it is not my object to unduly press on the business, but, at the same time, it is impossible to keep the Council together much longer. The honourable gentleman says, "You should invest the savings-bank funds in London and leave them there." That would be a pretty state of things.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—I said invest them in our own guaranteed debentures, and leave

them in London.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—The honourable gentleman seems to think that this is a Bill to borrow money for the purpose of paying the Sinking Fund. It is a Bill in order to clear off the Sinking Fund, and he will find that every provision is made for the purpose without burdening the taxpayers of the colony. My honourable friend laughs, but I can construe this Bill just as well as he can, and that is my construction of it. There are two objects in this Bill, as I informed the Council: one, to free the Sinking Fund; the other, to convert loans into a security which will have to pay a less rate of interest. I will, however, now leave the honourable gentleman to his own reflections. With regard to the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse—whose remarks in this Council are deserving of the very greatest weight-I am opposed to the construction that he places on clause 10. If he refers to the Treasurer's last Financial Statement he will find that by converting the loans and freeing the Sinking Fund a sum of money equal to seven and a half millions will be saved to the colony; and surely

that is something worthy of achievement.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Look at the 6th clause.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I am quite aware of the 6th clause; but the honourable gentleman referred particularly to the 10th clause. Now, what the honourable gentleman ways is the case, is really not the case. This Bill is intended simply to inscribe loans, and, while the operation of conversion is pending, it empowers the Treasurer to do certain things. I may state to the honourable gentleman—and I think I have stated it before—that the object of the Government is not to press this on the market all at once, but to take an opportunity, from time to time, of converting the loans. That is the object of the Bill, and I trust the Council will not hesitate to read it a second

Bill read a second and a third time.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS BILL. On the motion for the third reading of this-Bill,

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS moved, as an amendment, That the Order be discharged, and the Bill be recommitted, for the purpose of inserting the new clause which appeared

on the Order Paper.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE said that, before the proposal was agreed to, he should like some information as to the operation of this provision, which was apparently for the purpose of validating certain by-laws. He should like it to be explained what was the nature of the by-laws to be validated. Unless they had full information they might be doing an injustice to individuals as well as a wrong to the public interests. Was any litigation pending in connection with the by-laws which it was sought to validate?

The Hon. Mr. BRANDON further thought it likely that the clause would be in conflict with the provisions of the Police Offences Bill

which they had just passed.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN would advise his honourable friend to take the third reading of the Bill. The matter he wished to provide for by the proposed clause was difficult to understand, and would keep very well for another year. The London Board of Works did not interfere with buildings unless their existence was incompatible with the public safety.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS said, in explanation, that in Christchurch at the present time there was very great difficulty under the present Municipal Corporations Act, as the Magistrate there was apparently of opinion that the Municipal Corporations Act did not give sufficient power to the Corporation to make regulations as to what class of buildings should be erected there. The result was that the Corporation could not properly carry out its functions except by the expenditure of large sums of money in litigation. The object of the clause was to deprive the legal profession of unnecessary work. He knew that the provision was necessary, though practically, in Otago, it was not of much consequence, as there they were able to work under the provincial ordinance. He did not think the clause could do any harm, especially as they professed to give local self-government. The southern portion of the colony would demand a greater amount of local self-government than they had hithertohad, and it would be just as well that the Council should not put any obstacle in the way of allowing local bodies to deal with local affairs. He trusted the clause would be carried, as it was necessary to prevent a number of cases cropping up in Christchurch. At present there were no cases pending.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN would be very glad

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN would be very glad to aid his honourable friend Mr. Reynolds in the laudable object of preventing lawyers from having more work than was good for them, but he was not prepared to effect that at so great a sacrifice as was proposed in the Bill. He declined altogether to take upon himself the responsibility of validating all the by-laws ever-

made by the Municipal Councils of New Zealand. He had some knowledge of these bylaws, and he must say the provisions of some of them were such as he should not like to make himself responsible for. The doctrine of his honourable friend, that it was the duty of the Legislature to make the local bodies as efficient as possible, and that the way to do that was to let them alone, while, in the next breath, he said that, instead of letting them alone severely, the Legislature should take the responsibilities for all their irregularities, and validate their by-laws, was at least illogical, if not absurd.

The Hon. Mr. BRANDON remarked that, according to the clause, whatever irregularities had been committed were to be validated. He thought that to make the alteration would be to give more work to the lawyers.

Amendment negatived. Bill read a third time.

# BEET-ROOT SUGAR BILL.

The Hon. the SPEAKER .-- I was asked yesterday whether it was competent for this Council to amend any of the clauses of a Bill intituled "The Beet-root Sugar Act, 1884." The extempore reply which I gave 1884." The extempore reply which I gave was to the effect that, although the Bill did not appear to me to be strictly a money Bill, yet I was clear that it was not competent for the Council to interfere with the 2nd clause, and that I had doubts as to its power over clauses 3 and 4. Since then I have examined this Bill more carefully, and am of opinion that the Council cannot amend or interfere with either of the clauses 2 and 3; but that, with regard to clause 4, it is competent for the Council to omit it, if it should so think fit, although not to amend it. The provisions of this last clause are hypothetical and contingent, and, as such, cannot be regarded as essential, and are therefore separable from the rest of the Bill without causing its destruction, and may be omitted by the Legislative Council if it shall think fit.

The Hon. Mr. HART.—For the reasons that have been given by the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse, supplemented by the Hon. Dr. Pollen, and put briefly in this way—namely, that what the Bill proposes to do will be either to offer inducements to speculators from England to invest money in what will be a losing speculation in New Zealand, or it will be a dead-letter for ten years to come—I think it undesirable that this Bill should pass. It will not be innocuous if a dead-letter, for it will be for the second time affirming a principle which was first affirmed when the power to distil spirits in the colony was authorized by law, and heavy compensation was paid upon that authorization being withdrawn—that was, the principle of Protection. The colony, for the thirty years that the Legislature has been in existence, has steadily resisted that principle. It may be regarded as a general opinion that the duties put on imports for purposes of revenue have been sufficient encouragement to offer for the establish-

Hon. Dr. Pollen

ment of industries for the protection of those things which can be properly and profitably produced in the colony. Under these circumstances, for the mere purposes of the future to put on the Statute Book a measure which can have no tangible result, and which will be for the second time affirming the principle of Protection, is, to my mind, doing a mischief; and therefore I shall vote against the Bill.

therefore I shall vote against the Bill.

The Hon. Mr. WILLIAMSON.—I am led to believe that there are persons in New Zealand now prepared to undertake this industry: in fact, I have been spoken to by a gentleman who said that he had made arrangements, if the Bill passed, to commence the industry immediately. I must admit I have great doubts about its answering in a money point of view at present. I think the cost of labour will eat up any possible profit that might be made in the industry at present. However, I think that, under the circumstances, it would be better this Bill should pass. I believe a very large number of Belgians are expected in this colony before long, and this is an industry that would apparently suit them. Under all the

circumstances, I intend to support the Bill.

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN.—I shall always be found ready to support a measure which promises employment to labour. It is hard to predict what the result may be, and I defy anybody to say whether it will be a failure or otherwise. It will all depend on circumstances, and whether any one going into the industry has sufficient capital to carry it out or not A great deal will depend on that. We are told that in Europe this industry is greatly carried on by females and children. Well, we need only look round to find that our population is increasing rather rapidly, and, if this industry would only find work for young people and females who cannot get better employment, it would be an honest occupation that we should do all in our power to promote. I cannot see where any risk comes in. The people who go into these undertakings generally know what they are about before they risk their money. Men of small means will be prevented from going into this industry, which will require a large amount of capital in order to procure the necessary machinery; and it is not for the Legislature, if persons feel inclined to speculate in a certain way, to prevent it. If we were to adopt that course, the result of our labours would be such that we might sit here from year's end to year's end without doing any good, but only troubling ourselves about the various occupations of people of the colony. I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill, believing it will be beneficial, if not at the present, then at some future time.

The Hon. Mr. SCOTLAND.—Sir, I intend to vote against this Bill. Notwithstanding what the Hon. Mr. Williamson has said, I do not think that any one, either in England or in this country, will take it up at all; but, for all that, I think it would be a very dangerous thing to place on our Statute Book an affirmation that we are in favour of Protection—that we think Protection would be a good thing for

[COUNCIL.]

this colony. It may be said this is a very small instalment. Well; granted. But the origin of Protection in the United States was very small; and what has been seen there during the last hundred years? Why, it has been constantly making fresh demands on the mation, until it has attained such enormous dimensions in some cases that now it is a question of time when it will be given up. I have not the slightest belief that this business will pay in New Zealand; and I do not believe that any stock-jobbing knight or shady colonel will be able to make it go down with even the most credulous portion of the public. I do not think any honourable gentleman has questioned the fitness of our climate for the growth of beet; but I have great doubts whether beet will ever come to perfection in New Zealand. In England there have been the most unsatisfactory results with it, even in the last few years. About forty years ago it was tried by a farmer on a large scale in the neighbourhood of Bury St. Edmunds, in Suffolk; and I think the result there was very unsatisfactory. At any rate, the thing has dropped out of sight in England for many years, and nothing is heard there about the growth of sugar-beet. On the ground that I object to Protection in any shape or form beyond granting a bonus only, and nothing more—which I would make larger than the bonus proposed here, if necessary-I shall certainly vote against the second reading of this Bill.

The Hon. Mr. G. BUCKLEY.—I have taken some interest in this question since beet seed was first distributed by the Government some ten years ago. My experience then was in South Canterbury, and, so far as one can judge, there was a good growth of root, which contained, I believe, a good percentage of saccha-rine matter. At that time it was also found that beet was very useful for feeding stock, and that sheep would eat it in preference to either mangolds or turnips. Therefore the growth of beet might be useful for that purpose if for no other. During recent visits to the Continent I have been to some districts where the beet-root industry is carried on, and I think I could give some information on the subject which might be interesting. I took some figures some time ago from the Beet-root Sugar Association established in London, and from them I find that during the last ten years there has been no increase—or hardly any—in the production of beet sugar in France or Belgium. The figures are these :-

1872. Tons. Tons. Tons 393,269 605,775 411,015 335,351 189,166 France and Belgium 57,918 416,609 249,489 German Empire ... Austria and Hungary Eussia and Poland 90,000 270,000 180,000 Totals... 776,043 1,680,059 904,016

1882

Now, one reason, I understand, why so large an increase has taken place outside of France is that a very economical process has been secretly worked in Germany for many years and until recently, when patents were taken out by the Professor of Chemistry in the Royal

Agricultural College at Berlin. This process is now being adopted in France, Austria, and Russia. By the aid of that process, beet-root sugar has been produced in Germany, for several years, at much less expense than in France. The reason of it is that, in the new process, agents are used which are considered to extract every portion of sugar from the beet. So far as I could make out from a comparison of the soil and climate where beet is grown in France and Germany, I think there is reason to believe that the industry will be successful in New Zealand. From what came under my observation I should say that any good loans. soil suitable for root crops, which was not too rich or too moist, would grow beet very well. I think that several parts of New Zealand would be suitable as to climate. It is the last month that is most important in the growth of beet, when there should be dry weather and plenty of sun. That gives a good percentage of sugar; but, if the weather is cold or moist during the last month, then, of course, the percentage is very much less. With respect to the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse as tobeet-growing not being successful in England. I believe the reason must be the moist climate and the want of sunshine. But there is a very great difference in the climates of England and New Zealand, in favour of New Zealand. However, during the last few months there has been a very large company started to begin the industry again in Norfolk, which is considered to be one of the driest parts of England; and this new mineral earth which is used in the process of sugar-extraction is also found there, which is an additional advantage. That company has been started with a very large capital within the last six or eight months; but I believe it is not in working order yet. However, from a comparison made between the two places, I think it is an experiment worthy of trial. So far as I can judge, there are several parts of New Zealand which are very similar to parts of France and Ger-many in which beet is successfully grown. I shall certainly support the Bill, as it may induce some company to take the thing up. Of course, in France there are some very large factories. The one at Cambray is an enormous place, which cost £200,000, and it takes, I think, about three hundred thousand tons of roots during the season. Attached to it are numerous sheds and pens for feeding stock, the refuse being distributed to them by means of a short tramway. It is found that the industry will only pay in connection with feeding stock on the refuse. As to the question of profits, it is very difficult to obtain any information there; but from my own observation I came to this. opinion: I could hardly think the sugar-beet would be grown from year to year in some of the best soils of France and Germany, if it did not pay them a great deal better than any other crop. The companies have established large factories, and they all appear to pay very good dividends, and, generally speaking, there is no falling-off-there are no factories closed, or anything of the sort. The increase in pro398

duction in Germany, Austria, and Russia is something enormous in the last four years; and I do not think they would go on unless it proved to be paying. Some objection has been made on account of the labour question. Of course, in the cultivation of beet, a great deal is done by machinery; I know that even the weeding of it is done generally by small ploughs. The industry affords a very large amount of labour, and during the winter months there is a very large amount of labour in the factories. I should say that a factory here, with accommodation for feeding stock on the refuse, would hardly be established under fifty or sixty thousand pounds. However, I think we should offer this inducement, which may lead some one to take it up. I do not think it at all unlikely that persons already engaged in the industry might be induced to come out and take it up, and for that reason I shall support the Bill.

shall support the Bill. The Hon. Mr. BARNICOAT.—Although the Bill is rather a violation of the principles of Free-trade, I think it is such a violation as would meet with the sanction of the advocates of Freetrade themselves. It proposes a merely temporary sacrifice for very large and permanent benefit, as it may lead to the establishment of a great and important industry. I think that even Mill himself distinctly sanctions such a deviation from the principles of Free-trade for such a purpose. In a new country a variety of industries is very desirable, and this is an attempt, so far, to promote that desideratum. We ought not to be satisfied to go to the very ends of the earth, if it can be avoided, for such an article of constant and large consumption as sugar. No doubt, as has been said, the cultivation of beet-root or sorghum can only be carried on successfully where labour is cheap; and I was rather amused to find, in an account of their cultivation in France, that it is mentioned, with some degree of gratification, that labourers at piece-work are able to make 1s. 61d. to 1s. 8d. a day. But labour may be cheapened in two ways, either by the lowering of wages or by the application of machinery. Now, those who have been long engaged in farming in New Zealand will recollect how very much the cost of production has been cheapened by the latter method. In many farming operations—especially those connected with mowing and reaping—the expense is now only one-fourth of what it was twenty or thirty years ago. Nothing is more likely than that machinery could be applied to the cultivation of beet-root with similar success. I think, too, that, when a measure comes to us from the Government, and with the sanction of the other branch of the Legislature, nothing but the most weighty considerations should induce us to throw it out. If this Bill becomes a dead-letter, I do not know that much mis-chief will result. It would be only having one more inoperative measure on the Statute Book. But I believe it possible that it may become operative: at any rate, I think it is worth while to make the offer to the world, and the offer may be accepted. I shall vote for the second reading in the hope that the Bill may lead to beneficial results.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—Sir, I think I have nothing to reply to. The only objection that has been urged by the opponents of the Bill is that it will be inoperative, through no one taking advantage of it. Well, if so, it can do no harm to put it on the Statute Book. I hold, however, that there is every chance that it will be taken advantage of. The Hon. Mr. Williamson has mentioned one case in support of that view; and I myself was told, a day or two ago, that there was one party in Southland prepared to put two thousand acres into the cultivation of beet-how much beyond that I am not in a position to say. It has been stated that our climate is not good for beet, and it has been compared with that of Great Britain. Now, there is no comparison. We have a climate at the Strath Taieri and Maniototo, in the interior of Otago, where you can grow any fruit almost in the open airgrapes, peaches, &c.—I do not know if they have tried oranges. Lower down there is a more moist climate, and in Southland it is both colder and moister. We have all sorts of climates, and it would be very strange to me if beet would not grow in many parts of the colony. I feel perfectly certain that it is to the advantage of the colony that this Bill should be passed, and I do trust the Council will agree with the other branch of the Legislature and pass it, giving parties the opportunity to take advantage of its provisions.

Bill read a second and a third time.

NEW ZEALAND LOAN BILL.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.-In moving the second reading of this Bill, I think I may safely follow the example set in another place when it was moved in that Chamber, and make very few remarks upon it. It is one of those Bills which are always received with more or less pleasure by the Legislature. It is for the purpose of raising a loan of one and a half millions. If honourable members recollect the statement made by the Colonial Treasurer in his Financial Statement, they will not need to be reminded that the policy of the Government was to borrow one and a half millions, and with the view of carrying out that policy this Bill is framed. I notice it was received with such favour by the other branch of the Legislature that no discussion whatever took place on the second reading there.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—I have no doubt, Sir, that this Bill was received with rapture in the other branch of the Legislature, and I have no reason to believe it will be received in any other spirit in this, and I am satisfied that it will be received with pleasure by the colony at large. We have taken up the policy of borrowing. We depend upon borrowing, and it is generally recognized that, without borrowing, we should be called upon to exercise economy and prudence, which are not in accordance with our habits. We have borrowed to such an extent as to render our position as a colony one of danger, and, having this belief, I

Hon. Mr. G. Buckley

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cannot by my vote sanction any increase in the indebtedness of the colony. I think it would be well for the colony if Parliament examined our financial position more carefully and critically than it is in the habit of doing. Owing to this continual borrowing, we do not realize to what extent we are indebted to borrowing for paying our way. We have not been brought face to face with our financial difficulties, because we are continually receiving relief from loans. What is our position? We borrow to buy Native lands. We sell the Native lands. With the proceeds we do not pay off the loan incurred in connection with the purchase of those lands, but we absorb the proceeds in the general revenue, and that portion of the loan goes to pay our current expenditure. Again, we borrow to make roads to open districts. When the lands opened by borrowed money are sold, we never think of the indebtedness incurred in connection with these works, and of the increased value given to the land, but the proceeds of the land when sold at go once into our general revenue; and in this way borrowed money still helps to pay our current expenditure. We borrow to erect works, to build roads and bridges, and then we borrow to rebuild those bridges when they are carried away and to repair those roads when they are worn down. Sir, it is time that we realized our posi-tion. We cannot go on for ever in this way. We are living up to our credit, so that, if any calamity befell the colony in consequence of war or anything of that kind, we should find our-selves perfectly helpless. Is there one person in the colony who does not realize that, with the first cannon-shot fired in a war between England and a first-class European Power, our position would be so critical that we should not be able to maintain the full payment of the interest on our loans? Under these circumstances, I feel it my duty, in the hope that it may lead some persons, at any rate, to more carefully consider our position, and at the same time to relieve my conscience of the responsibility of incurring debts which I believe we shall not be able eventually to meet, to make these remarks.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.—I must say that I do not myself share in the joyousness with which this proposal to add to our indebtedness has been received, though I am quite conscious that nothing I can say will prevent the colony for the present from pursuing the onward course on which it is projected. But I take this objection to the Bill: that there is a very inordinate disproportion between the "bread" and the "sack." We are invited to appropriate a sum of £13,000 for immigration—which I hold to be the bread of life to the colony—and to spend the remainder of the million and a half in works which are certainly less important than that. I want to know why, under the circumstances of the colony, staggering as it is under a load of debt, so small a sum as £13,000 should be appropriated for the purpose of encouraging immigration, and why £40,000 should be proposed to be wasted on gold-fields roads, water-races, and so on, encouraging a

useless and mischievous industry on the gold fields. However, nothing I can say will have any effect in arresting our progress until we have got a little farther. All I can do is to

enter my protest against this policy.

The Hon. Mr. BONAR.—I might be inclined to follow my honourable friend Dr. Pollen in regard to the vote for immigration, but I really take exception to and protest against his statement in regard to the gold fields—that the sum set apart for gold-fields water-races, and so forth, will only tend to keep up a mischievous industry. I think the Legislature knows better than that. I think, when we consider that this mischievous industry has supported a large population, and exported gold worth £40,000,000, raised from land that otherwise was practically useless, it is too bad for any member of the Legislature to condemn that industry as a mischievous one, seeing that it has promoted the welfare of the colony. I think it is necessary that this money should be borrowed. I think we cannot help it, and, so long as the money is applied to works that have been com-

it will be to our advantage The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—I have been attacked two or three times by the Hon. Mr. Richmond on previous occasions for not giving my opinion on measures that have been brought forward; and, in case he should attack me on the present occasion, I rise to explain my vote regarding this Bill. I am as much opposed to the expenditure of money on unproductive works as any one in the colony, but the works under consideration have been commenced by previous Governments, and they must be completed. If honourable members will look at the estimates they will see that the expenditure is kept as low as possible on all unproductive works, except such as are in pro-

menced, so that we may not have a number of

works lying half completed all over the colony,

gress and must be completed. The Hon. Captain FRASER.-I think the Hon. Dr. Pollen is perfectly correct in his views on immigration. I should much rather see the £40,000 placed on the estimates for immigration than the paltry sum now proposed—£13,000. How are we to pay our debts if we do not encourage immigration? I am perfectly satisfied that if we go on borrowing large sums of money to spend on unremunerative works on gold fields we shall be doing that which is very unwise.

Bill read a second and a third time.

#### PROPERTY-TAX BILL.

Bill read a second time.

On the question, That the Bill be read a third

The Hon. Mr. WILSON said, -I am not rising with any intention of offering opposition to the third reading of the Bill, but I must say I think this is a very bad, an exceedingly self-ish, measure. The property-tax is the only contribution to the revenue made by persons holding property; and this is the first step to throw the whole of the taxation on those people who are least able to bear it. I am quite

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aware that it will be received with favour, and any opposition of mine can do nothing; but I think it is a very unjust measure.

B. West.

Bill read a third time.

The Council adjourned at eleven o'clock p.m.

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Wednesday, 5th November, 1884.

First Readings—Second Reading—Porangahau-Waipukurau Railway—B. West—Ammunition—Coke for Locomotives—Gravel Reserve, Waitangi—Broadleaf for Sleepers—Friendly Societies' Delegates—Wingatui Viaduct—Macrae's Telephone—Pembroke Police-quarters—Parcels on Railways—Nevis Valley-Garston Road—Belgian Immigrants—Westport Colliery Company—J. W. Crawford—J. Dinan—Felling Timber on Roadlines—Beet-root Sugar—Te Kooti—Katikati—Thames Telegraph—Wanganui Harbour Board Empowering Bill—Bankruptcy Bill—Native Lands Settlement Bill—Civil List Bill—Mail Service with England—Wellington Hospital—Supply.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READINGS.

Railways Authorization Bill, Special Powers and Contracts Bill.

SECOND READING. Special Powers and Contracts Bill.

#### PORANGAHAU-WAIPUKURAU RAIL-WAY.

Mr. SMITH asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether the Government will, during the recess, have a survey made of a branch railway-line to connect Porangahau with the main line at Waipukurau? He had merely to say that if this branch railway-line were made it would be a great advantage to the district. He hoped the Minister for Public Works would be able to see his way to have a survey made.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the cost of survey would be £700, and the Government were not prepared to incur this expense at the pre-

sent time.

B. WEST.

Mr. MOSS asked the Government, If they have been informed that one Benjamin West was, on the 28th October, sent to gaol in Auckland as a vagrant, that he was then in a dying state, and died three days after his sentence; also, whether they will take steps to provide proper means for the reception of unfortunate persons of this kind who are necessarily sent to the common gaol? He had asked a question of a similar character at an earlier period of the session. He knew nothing of the person re-ferred to. West was sent to prison as a vagrant in a dying state. He was in that state when sentence was passed upon him, and he died three days after admission. There was no fitting place to which such persons could be sent. The hospital was full, and the other institutions had a natural dislike to taking in

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persons of this kind. The time had come when some provision should be made by whoever was responsible in the matter. It was with that object he had brought the case under the notice of the Government

Mr. TOLE replied that he had made inquiries respecting this case, and had ascertained that a man named Benjamin West was sentenced to one year's imprisonment, on the 28th ultimo, on a charge of vagrancy, and sent to the prison infirmary. He was not sent to the penal portion of the prison. He died at eleven o'clock on the night of the 31st-three days after his admission. He was an old offender, and in a very bad state of health.

# AMMUNITION.

Mr. BRUCE asked the Native Minister, Whether he could not relax the present restrictions on the sale of ammunition, so as to allow it to be sold until 6 p.m. instead of 4 p.m., such restriction being attended with great inconvenience to country settlers?

Mr. BALLANCE replied that there was no objection to relax the present restrictions to the extent asked for on the sale of ammunition, and an alteration in the regulations would ac-

cordingly be made.

# COKE FOR LOCOMOTIVES.

Mr. O'CALLAGHAN asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether he will take into his consideration the advisableness of using coke instead of coal for locomotives, whenever the passenger traffic through tunnels in the colony is sufficient to warrant it, for the convenience

of the travelling public?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said he found, on reference to the department, that this question had been brought up and dealt with by a previous Minister. He thought the matter deserved further consideration, and he should be glad to see what could be done. He had been informed that the cost of this change on one line alone would be £1,200 a year, but he was bound to say that he did not see how such a large expenditure could be incurred. He would look into the matter.

# GRAVEL RESERVE, WAITANGI.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked the Minister of Lands, Whether he will give effect to the request of the Waimate County Council, that Gravel Reserve No. 817, Waitangi District, which is no longer required for the purpose for which it was reserved, may be offered for sale; and, if so, whether said section will be submitted at the land sale to be held at Waimate in March next?

Mr. BALLANCE said there was no objection to the sale of this reserve, but legislative authority would be required before it could be sold.

#### BROADLEAF FOR SLEEPERS.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether, seeing that it has been admitted that broadleaf, if obtainable of suitable size, is admirably adapted for railway sleepers, he will direct that, in order to test HOUSE.1

the question, this kind of timber should, in future, be mentioned, in calling for tenders for the supply of sleepers in the South Island, as one of those descriptions for which tenders may be submitted?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said there was no objection to broadleaf being mentioned in future specifications, and therefore it would be inchuded.

# FRIENDLY SOCIETIES' DELEGATES.

Mr. HATCH asked the Minister for Public Works, Will the Government make such a concession as will allow delegates of the various friendly societies to travel on Government railways at the excursion rates to their annual meetings of delegates? The various friendly societies were under the control of the Government to some extent so far as their funds were concerned, and the Government therefore had some interest in seeing that the funds were not unnecessarily spent, and might very well make such a concession as was suggested in the question.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said that, if the numbers of these friendly - society delegates were sufficiently large, no doubt some consideration might be given; but the question was so vague, if the honourable member would allow him to say so, that it was not easy to give a direct answer. However, he might promise that every possible facility would be given to insure the cheap travelling of delegates.

# WINGATUI VIADUCT.

Mr. M. J. S. MACKENZIE asked the Minister for Public Works, If he has given consideration to the question as to whether the object of the viaduct mentioned in the Public Works Statement as the Wingatui Viaduct might be better, more expeditiously, and more economically attained by means of earthwork and culvert? He asked this question because he had been informed, on good engineering authority, that what was suggested in the question could easily be done. He was informed that earthwork could be constructed at half the cost of the viaduct, and in less time; and it must also be remembered that the construction of earthworks would employ a large num-ber of hands in the meantime, which in itself would be a great boon. His object in asking the question was to set the matter at rest.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON was understood to say that the honourable gentleman's informant was in error. During the last six weeks or two months he had gone closely into the matter with the engineers of the Public Works Department, and the result of his investigations was entirely opposed to what the honourable gentle-man had stated. A special survey had been made for the purpose of ascertaining the relative cost of doing the work in these different ways, and it was found that the viaduct would cost considerably less than the earthwork, even as a matter of first cost; but then there would be a heavy charge for maintaining the embankment for a considerable time, because it would take a long time for an embankment of the depth required to finally settle. If this work had been put in hand two or three years ago, as it should have been, there would have been plenty of work for the unemployed by this time. He might add that he had altered the specifications so that all the articles required in the construction of the viaduct could be obtained in the colony. ,The work would cost close on £20,000.

Mr. FULTON moved the adjournment of the House to enable him to say that, like the honourable member for Mount Ida, he had had this matter brought under his notice more than once by persons in the district, and by engineers, who had informed him that, though the embankment would probably not cost less than the viaduct-it certainly would cost no more, or very little more—there would be this great advantage: that there would be nothing required for repairs except, as the Minister for Public Works had said, at the outset.

Mr. E. RICHARDSÓN.-I said "for a considerable time.'

Mr. FULTON supposed the expense would simply be while the embankment was settling; but in the case of a viaduct there would always be a maintenance charge. There would also be this advantage in connection with earthwork: that it would give employment to the unemployed at work which they could all do, and they would get exactly what they were worth. If the Minister had not absolutely committed himself, he (Mr. Fulton) should be glad if the honourable gentleman would go into the question, and see whether this proposal could really

be carried out with advantage. Mr. FERGUS was sorry the discussion had arisen, because there was no doubt that the Minister for Public Works had taken the right course. It would be far better for the honourable members for Mount Ida and the Taieri to allow the Government to go on with the work at once, instead of suggesting this alternative. A viaduct over Mullocky Gully would certainly be cheaper than an embankment. As for the cry about the unemployed, he hoped they would hear no more about that. He hoped there would soon be plenty of work to absorb all the unemployed.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the result of calculations was that the estimate was over £6,000 in favour of the viaduct, even taking earthwork at the very lowest rate. He was not aware of any case of an embankment such as that proposed being constructed. In addition to the embankment, a tunnel of considerable length would be required to carry off the water coming down the gully.

Mr. FULTON had not intended to set himself up as an engineering authority, but had simply brought the matter forward in order that doubts might be set at rest.

Motion for adjournment withdrawn.

MACRAE'S TELEPHONE.

Mr. M. J. S. MACKENZIE asked the Commissioner of Telegraphs, If he will establish a telephone station at Macrae's?

Mr. STOUT said the railway would soon be

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extended from Palmerston to Jordan's, and arrangements would then be made to comply

with the request contained in the question. PEMBROKE POLICE-QUARTERS.

Mr. FERGUS asked the Minister of Justice, Whether he will cause police-quarters to be erected at Pembroke?

Mr. TOLE said he believed there was need for a police-station at Pembroke, and steps would be taken to have one erected.

# PARCELS ON RAILWAYS.

Mr. HOLMES asked the Minister for Public Works, If it is profitable for the Railway Department to collect parcels at Rangiora to carry to Christchurch, would it not be more profitable to collect parcels at Christchurch and Dunedin to carry from one of those cities to the other?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said that experience had been so satisfactory that, in future delivery contracts, provision would be made for collecting parcels in all the large towns of the colony.

#### NEVIS VALLEY-GARSTON ROAD.

Mr. FERGUS asked the Minister of Lands, Whether he will cause a road to be constructed to connect the Nevis Valley with Garston Railway-station viâ the Nokomai Saddle? The road would cost about £800, and, besides connecting the valley with this railway-station on the Invercargill-Kingston Railway-line, it would also open lands fit for settlement.

Mr. BALLANCE said that the road would cost at least three times the amount stated by the honourable member, and he had not been able to learn that the advantage would be at all commensurate with the expenditure.

Mr. FERGUS said he did not ask for a macadamized road, but simply for a track.

Mr. BALLANCE said he would make further inquiries.

# BELGIAN IMMIGRANTS.

Mr. WAKEFIELD asked the Government, Whether, on the arrival of M. De Harven and his party, the pioneers of Belgian immigration to New Zealand, they will afford them facilities for visiting all parts of the colony, and afford them all available information and assistance for the purpose of their mission? The question needed more explanation than questions ordinarily did, and he must therefore occupy the time of the House for a few moments. M. De Harven and his party were not, he understood, officially accredited in any way.

Mr. STOUT.—Yes.

Mr. WAKEFIELD .-- Not by the King of the Belgians.

Mr. STOUT.—No; by Lord Derby. Mr. WAKEFIELD was glad to hear that. He knew they were not accredited by the Belgian Government. They were representa-tives of a syndicate at Antwerp, who had raised a couple of thousand pounds for ex-penditure on this mission; and M. De Harven's brother had applied to him (Mr. Wakefield), as |

Mr. Stout

one who took great interest in the matter, and had asked him if the party would receive official recognition on the part of the Govern-It occurred to him that the Government. ment would afford the party such recognition as a matter of course, especially when he remembered the interest taken in such matters by the Treasurer, who was, he believed, personally acquainted with M. De Harven. He therefore did not wish to be understood as implying by this question that the Government were not likely to have considered the matter. He had no doubt that, in reply to his question, they would hear that the Government had had the subject under consideration. He, however, wished to point out that this movement was of great importance to the colony, because, if the expectations of those who were concerned in it were at all realized, it would tend to bring a great deal of capital into the colony, and also a large population of a most desirable class, without any expense to the New Zealand Government. He held in his hand what we in this colony should call the prospectus, in which the objects of this syndicate were set forth. It appeared that they had here the nucleus of a very important organization, which should receive every encouragement. It was in order to satisfy the friends of these gentlemen in New Zealand, who were in communication with them, and who were not acquainted with the extent to which the Government had gone in the matter, that he had placed the question on the Paper.

Mr. STOUT, who was inaudible in the gallery, was understood to say that honourable members would see it was not necessary to put such a question on the Paper; but, from the manner in which it was put, he would reply by saying that the Government were notified of the intended visit through the Colonial Office, and the Government would do what they could to make these gentlemen thoroughly acquainted with the colony and its resources.

Mr. WAKEFIELD'S only reason for saying M. De Harven was not accredited was that he had applied to the Belgian Government, who, although they expressed every sympathy with the movement, had felt obliged to decline to give it any official recognition.

# WESTPORT COLLIERY COMPANY.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Government, Whether they will take steps for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into and report upon the circumstances under which the Minister of Lands authorized the sale of the town-ship of Wallsend to the Westport Colliery Com-pany on the 7th June, 1884? If the Government had given this company the freehold of the Wallsend Coal Mine, he failed to see how the conditions stated by the Minister of Lands as to giving the occupiers a lease of their holdings could be carried into effect. He wished to have a Committee appointed in order that full information might be obtained, and a report furnished to the House recommending what steps should be taken. He had heard it said that the company were not desirous of retaining

this freehold, but were willing to give it back for the amount paid. If a Committee could ascertain that to be a fact, it would do a very great service to the interests of settlement in a

rising and important district.

Mr. BALLANCE said it appeared to him that the honourable gentleman himself should have moved for the appointment of a Committee. The Government did not recognize it to be their duty to appoint a Committee; and, as the honourable gentleman, moreover, ought to be aware, at this stage of the session it would be entirely useless to appoint a Committee.

Mr. SHRIMSKI moved the adjournment of the House. It was stated that this land was sold to the company at £5 per acre; and the tenants were then paying £5 a year for an eighth of an acre, which was to be reduced to £2 10s. As the company were thus getting a rental of £20 an acre, the freehold of which only cost £5, surely there ought to be something binding on the company to give the tenants leases. He thought a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into the

matter during the recess.

Mr. GUINNESS said he would have moved for the appointment of a Committee himself if the Standing Orders enabled him to bring forward such a motion; but if he had given notice of motion it would never have been heard of again. The Government, however, could have brought forward such a motion at any time. He regretted that the Government did not think this was a matter that should be inquired into

Mr. STOUT said the honourable member was hardly correct in saying the Government did not think the matter should be inquired into. To appoint a Committee at this stage of the session would simply be burking inquiry alto-It was a matter that could be in-

quired into next session.

Mr. SEDDON would point out that a Crown grant had not yet been issued. In the meantime the grant should be held in abeyance, because the point raised by the honourable member for Greymouth was a very important one, for, if the Crown grant were issued to the company, the Government would have no right to claim the full observance of the conditions mentioned by the late Minister of Lands

as to rentals of the tenants.

Mr. O'CONOR considered it a very great pity indeed that a matter of this kind should be brought up for discussion in this inconvenient Rightly or wrongly, a contract had been entered into with certain private individuals, and it was not in the power of the Government, without giving these people a claim for compensation, to violate that contract. They had paid their money and got their receipt, which was just as good to them as a Crown He considered that really there had been a great cry raised about very little. If this rent which had been mentioned was exorbitant, why did not the Government charge their tenants less for land in their own possession at Westport, where tenants had put all the improvements on the land without any aid from | culated.

the Government, and yet were charged more than three times what this company was charging?

J. W. CRAWFORD.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Minister for Public Works, If he will inquire into the claim for compensation made by J. W. Crawford who was injured while engaged at work on the Greymouth Harbour works — with a view of

affording relief?
Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that he would

inquire into the matter.

#### J. DINAN.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Minister for Public Works, If he will inquire into the claim for compensation made by John Dinan—who was injured while engaged at work at the Greymouth Harbour quarry works—with a view of affording relief?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said he would inquire

into this matter also.

# FELLING TIMBER ON ROAD-LINES.

Mr. BEETHAM asked the Minister of Lands. If the Government will, during the present session, take any action to carry out the recom-mendations of the Waste Lands Board of the Wellington District relating to the advisability of felling timber on road-lines previously to the blocks of land being thrown open for sale? The local bodies in the Wairarapa experienced great difficulty in keeping roads in a fair state of repair, owing to the fact that, when they passed through bush, they were overshadowed by the dense growth of timber, so that the sun could never get into them. He trusted the Government would see their way to place a suffi-cient sum on the estimates to enable the Waste Lands Board to make arrangements to fell a certain amount of bush on each side of the roads in new bush districts, before the land was offered for sale. There would then be no difficulty in adding the value of such work to the upset price of the land before sale, so that when the lands were sold the Government would not suffer any loss

Mr. BALLANCE understood that the recommendation of the Waste Lands Board was to the effect that money should be placed at their disposal for the purpose of widening the roads, or, at any rate, felling the timber five chains The department had hitherto always wide. retained in its own hands the responsibility for doing this work, and he saw no reason whatever for changing the system. With regard to clearing the road five chains wide, he agreed with the honourable member that it was desirable in some places, and, where it was neces-sary, that was now done, and would be done in future.

BEET-ROOT SUGAR.

Mr. DUNCAN asked the Colonial Treasurer, If he will cause Parliamentary Paper H.-2. 1876, to be reprinted, with a view to its general circulation? This was a paper by Sir Julius Vogel relating to the growth of beet-root, and it was desirable it should be reprinted and cir404

Mr. STOUT replied that the Government would take steps to have the paper reprinted.

# TE KOOTI.

Mr. M. J. S. MACKENZIE asked, without notice, if the Government had observed the paragraphs and telegrams that had appeared in the newspapers during the last few days with reference to an expected visit of Te Kooti to the East Coast; and whether the Native Minister would supply the House with any information he might chance to have received on the subject.

Mr. BALLANCE said that Te Kooti had for some time been not threatening but giving out that he was going to the East Coast—to Wairea and other places in Poverty Bay. He had expressed his intention of doing so from time to time for several months past, and before the last Government left office they sent letters and telegrams to Te Kooti, warning him of the danger of visiting the scenes of his former actions in 1868 and 1869. Two or three warnings had been given, and lately a telegram was sent by him (Mr. Ballance), again warning Te Kooti against visiting Wairoa and the surrounding districts. The telegram was to Mr. G. T. Wilkinson, at Alexandra, and was dated the 25th October, 1884. It was in the following terms:—

"Your letter of 18th October, enclosing one addressed to you by Te Kooti, dated the 14th instant, has been received to-day, and submitted to the Hon. the Native Minister. Mr. Ballance directs me to request that you will inform Te Kooti that the objection made by the late and the present Government to his visiting Wairos and Poverty Bay is in his own personal interest as well as that of peace and order. Te Kooti, having been pardoned, is free, subject to the law, to visit any part of the colony, and the Government do not wish to interfere with his liberty. As a subject of the Queen, he is, of course, entitled to the protection of the law; but it is against the law to do anything calculated to provoke a breach of the peace; and, if he proposes to go about the country with armed followers, that is contrary to the law also. What the Government wish is to give him the best advice, which is, not to visit districts where, in consequence of his own acts, the Natives and Europeans are hostile to him, but to remain quietly upon the land provided for him.'

In reply to that, the Government received the following letter, dated the 24th October; but there was a mistake in the date. It ought to be the 25th, as the telegram was dated the

24th:--

"Otewa, 24th October, 1884.

" To the Government.

"Greeting. I have heard from Mr. Wilkinson that you disapprove of the contents of my letter, which he communicated to you. It is well. You did it out of regard for me and for my safety.

"Friend, it was they themselves—the people of Wairoa—who expressed a wish to see me, and appointed a time for our meeting each other. They invited me, relying upon your Proclamation, issued under the Amnesty Act,

setting forth the elemency of the Government and establishing peace; and I accepted their invitation. A house for my reception has been built at Wairoa. It is the people of Gisboms and further up the East Coast, northward, who still retain their animosity. I am communicating to them—the people of Wairoa—the nature of your message at the same time that I address this letter to you. If they reply, I will let you know what they say. I myself accepted this token of their regard for me, believing that the amnesty granted by the Government, the elemency shown by them, the union of the two races, the establishment of peace and the Queen's authority, would prevent the recurrence of any evil practices. That is all. God save our gracious Queen.

"Friend, you might send me Kahiti, &c., in order that I may be conversant with what is going on.—From your loving friend,

"TE KOOTI TE TUBUKI."

# KATIKATI-THAMES TELEGRAPH.

Colonel FRASER asked the Commissioner of Telegraphs, Whether the Government, now that all Native obstacles are removed, will make arrangements to take the telegraph-line from Katikati to Thames through the previously-intended direct and peopled district connecting the gold fields of Wahi, Owharos, and Karangahake to Paeroa, instead of by the present long, expensive to be maintained, and uninhabited route?

Mr. STOUT replied that the main line from Taupo to Auckland would not go by Katikati. Several routes had been spoken of, but the exact route had not been determined. As to the District of Paeroa being connected by telegraph, in all probability a line would be run from Katikati to Paeroa at no distant date.

# WANGANUI HARBOUR BOARD EM-POWERING BILL.

Mr. BALLANCE moved, That the amendments made in this Bill by the Legislative Council, with the exception of the amendments in clauses 9 and 11, be agreed to.

Mr. BRYCE could hardly conceive that the honourable gentleman was serious in his proposition not to accept the amendments in these The amendments there made two clauses. were precisely the same as those which the Council had inserted in the Napier and Gisborne Bills, and which the House had accepted. It seemed to him to be putting rather too heavy a strain on the loyalty of the honourable gentleman's friends, who had followed him so faithfully hitherto, to ask them to stultify themselves by disagreeing with amendments which they had already assented to in the case of two other Bills. The amendments were to this effect: that, whereas the Bill as sent to the Legislative Council provided that a ma-jority of votes at the poll should decide upon the rate to be raised, the amendments required that a majority of the votes "exercisable should be obtained. He moved, That the He moved, That the whole of the amendments made by the Legislative Council be agreed to.

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Mr. STOUT said that, if honourable members | in charge of Bills chose to accept amendments made by the Legislative Council, that was no reason that the same course should be followed by every honourable member who brought a Bill before the House. The meaning of "exercisable" was very difficult to determine. It might mean that it was the total number of votes on the roll, including the votes of persons absent from the district; so that the amendment left the matter quite open, and it was impossible to say who was to decide. If it were a question of saying that something more than a bare majority of the votes should be required, it would be easy to understand that. If it were proposed to make it necessary to obtain a majority of one-fifth extra, as in the case of the Municipal Acts, that would be fair; but to allow, as the Bill now provided, that the vote of every man who was absent from the district should count against the rate, was not fair. Of course one did not always believe what one read in the newspapers, but he had seen it stated that some persons in Wanganui who were opposed to the Bill had been going about boasting that the insertion of these amendments by the Legislative Council would have the effect of killing the Bill by making it unworkable.

Mr. BRYCE knew nothing of that proceeding, but he might say that, when he had proposed to insert a provision in the Bill making a majority of three-fifths necessary, he had been jumped upon by the honourable member's majority.

Mr. MACANDREW said this Bill had been well fought out already, and had been carried by a very large majority; so that the House would be stultifying itself if it were to recede from the ground which it had taken up. He would support the motion of the Minister of Lands.

Mr. BALLANCE said the honourable member for Waitotara knew very well that if the word "exercisable" were left in it would kill the Bill. The honourable gentleman knew that if the word were retained it would be impossible to poll a majority. It would mean that the lame, the halt, and the blind, and every person absent from the district, should have his vote counted against the rate, and only those who took a strong interest in the matter, and who might have to come a long distance, would have their votes recorded in favour of the proposal. As to the provision having been inserted in the Napier and Gisborne Bills, he did not know whether there was any property vote in the case of the Napier Bill, and, with regard to the Gisborne Bill, he thought the insertion of the provision would be very detrimental to the working of the Bill. Unless there was very great enthusiasm in the district it would be impossible, under such a provision, to obtain a majority of votes. Besides that, the case of Wanganui was very different from those of the other places, because at Wanganui the works were already in course of construction, and it would be most injurious to the district if they were to be stopped. He proposed, therefore,

that the word "exercisable" should be struck out, and that the Bill should revert to the position in which it left the House, so that a majority of those who went to the poll should determine whether the rate should be raised or not.

The House divided.

AYES, 46. Ballance Lance Shephard Barron Locke Shrimski Macandrew Bevan Smith B.-Bradshaw Macarthur Steward, W. J. Mackenzie, M. Stewart, W. D. Brown Buckland, J. C. McKenzie, J. Stout Cadman McMillan Sutter Cowan Moat Te Ao Dargaville Fitzherbert Newman Thompson, T. O'Callaghan Tole O'Conor Fraser Turnbull Grey Pere Walker. Guinness Pyke Harper Reese Tellers. Hatch Richardson, E. Levestam Holmes White, W. Ross Noes, 17. Atkinson Johnston Thomson, J.W. Beetham Lake Trimble Buchanan Menteath Wakefield. Conolly Peacock Tellers. Hakuene Rolleston Bryce Hobbs Russell Fulton. Majority for, 29.

Amendment negatived, and motion agreed

On the motion of Mr. BALLANCE, Mr. Macandrew, Mr. O'Conor, and the mover were appointed a Committee to draw up reasons for disagreeing with the amendments made by the Legislative Council in the clauses referred to.

# BANKRUPTCY BILL.

Mr. STOUT moved, That the amendments proposed by the Governor in this Bill be agreed to

Mr. W. D. STEWART said it was proposed to repeal sections 78 and 79 of the Act, one of which must have got into the measure by mistake. If the proposed amendments were agreed to a very serious alteration would be made in the law. The new clause did not profess to deal with the same matters as were dealt with in the clauses proposed to be re-pealed. The law relating to fraudulent preference would be entirely repealed by the proposed repeal of section 78. There would be nothing to prevent a person squandering his property amongst particular creditors, so long as they did not know the real state of his affairs. The debtor would not be likely to in affairs. The debtor would not be likely to inform them of the whole of the facts, and the result would be that his conduct would not be assailable. He thought that section 78 should be allowed to remain, or that section 48 of the English Bankruptcy Act of last year should be adopted, and section 79 be repealed. The proposed new section might then be introduced. It was analogous to section 49 of the English Act passed last year. He would also suggest,

in reference to the clause giving the Official Assignee power to appear in Court and examine the bankrupt, that the Assignee's power should be extended to the examination of witnesses

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Mr. CONOLLY said the honourable member for Dunedin West had to a considerable ex-tent anticipated what he had wished to say on the subject. The most important of the proposed alterations was that which enabled a debtor to make payments to particular creditors within three months of the time of filing his petition. That was directly in opposition to clause 78 of the Act, and, if it were passed, that clause might as well be repealed. His opinion was in favour of the law as it at present stood, for the reasons stated by the honourable mem-ber for Dunedin West. To alter the law as proposed would enable a man to go on making preferential payments up to the date of filing his petition. He would also point out that the provision in the proposed new clause 29, to the effect that the changes in the law should come into operation on the 1st December, was hardly a desirable one. The Acts could not be printed and distributed by that time. The date should

be made the 1st January.

Mr. STOUT agreed to some extent with what had been said; but the position at present was That had that sections 77 and 78 conflicted. been decided by the Court, and it had been contended that the effect of the law was that payments made bond fide even might have to be returned. Take the case of a man carrying on business in the ordinary way of business, who owed, say, £40 or £50 to his draper. The trader sent in his account and was paid. But, if the person who paid the account filed his petition within three months or two and a half months, the draper had to pay the money back to the Assignee. That was not a proper state of the law. He (Mr. Stout) did not think, where a man had given good consideration for what he had been paid, that he should be called upon to pay anything back to the Official Assignee. In discussing the case alluded to by the honourable member for Dunedin West, one of the Judges said he could hardly understand the Legislature having meant that, but he could not understand what the Legislature did mean. There might be some alteration made in the clauses, and, if the honourable member wished, he would postpone the mat-ter until next day, and in the meantime they might see what could be done.

Debate adjourned.

NATIVE LANDS SETTLEMENT BILL. On the motion for the committed of this Bill, Sir G. GREY said he hoped the committed of the Bill would be postponed, because new clauses had been circulated on a Supplementary Order Paper, and had only just come into the hands of the Native members, so that they were not in a position to understand them or to debate them. One of these clauses, which defined the meaning of the word "Native," would absolutely disinherit a large number of most amiable persons. There were cases

Mr. W. D. Stewart

in which ladies in a high position in life, fulfilling their duties in a manner that excited the admiration of everybody, would find their children absolutely disinherited if this clause passed.

Mr. BALLANCE said the amendments which had been last circulated were of a very trifling nature, and might be fully discussed when the Bill was in Committee. At this period of the session it was time the Bill was advanced through Committee, and sent to the Legislative Council.

Sir G. GREY did not think the lateness of the period of the session furnished any excuse for hurrying a Bill of such great importance.

Mr. TE AO said the Bill had been altered four times by the Native Minister, and he (Mr. Te Ao) had not yet had time to consider the last-proposed amendments. He therefore thought the Bill should not be hurried into Committee. He desired to move some amendments himself, but he had not been able to get them printed yet.

The House divided.

#### AYES, 49.

Allwright Holmes Ross Atkinson Joyce Russell Ballance Lake Samuel Beetham Shephard Lance Bevan Levestam Shrimski Stout Bruce Locke Bryce Macandrew Sutter Conolly Macarthur Thompson, T. Cowan Mackenzie, M. Tole Duncan McKenzie, J. Trimble Fitzherbert Moss Turnbull Fraser Newman Vogel Fulton O'Conor Walker. Peacock Grigg Hamlin Pyke Tellers. Hatch Richardson, E. Barron Hobbs Steward, W. J. Rolleston

Noes, 18. Moat

Brown Pearson Guinness Pere Hakuene Reese Hursthouse

Grey

Johnston

Menteath

Wakefield. Tellers. Richardson, G. Thomson, J. W. Stewart, W. D. Wilson.

Taiaroa Te Ao

Majority for, 31.

Motion agreed to. Bill considered in Committee, and reported, with amendments.

On the question, That the Bill be read a third time,

Sir G. GREY said,—I am very sorry the Bill has been hurried through in the way it has been, and, as we are informed, necessarily so at this late period of the session. I wish, however, to add this: that, if there had been an opportunity of considering the amendments brought forward by the honourable member for the Eastern Maori District, I think the House would have found that they contained elements of great good. I think myself that it is very essential that all Native lands should be sold in New Zealand publicly, and exactly

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in such blocks and in such manner as the Government think necessary for the public good, the whole proceeds of the land going to the Natives; but this being required: that the lands should always be sold in New Zealand, so that the inhabitants of this colony should have the first chance of acquiring these lands which are certainly excellent in quality, and are now diminishing continually in quantity. There is now no provision made for that in this Bill. Nor is there any provision made for the land being sold in small blocks, suited to the purposes of settlers in this colony. If time had permitted for making the alterations pro-posed by Mr. Pere, with some amendments drafted on them, I believe we should have passed the best code of laws for disposing of Native lands that I think could be passed by this Assembly; and I am very sorry that sufficient time was not given for considering these amendments.

Bill read a third time.

#### CIVIL LIST BILL.

Mr. STOUT .- At this period of the session I do not intend to take up much of the time of the House in moving the second reading of this Bill. As honourable members are aware, this Bill provides for an extra Minister of the Crown - a Minister who would specially look after the Mining Department. Honourable members who have watched the industries of the colony will have seen that, during a series of years, there has been a gradual decrease in the results so far as gold-mining is concerned. In many districts very large sums of money have been expended by companies in developing industries, and large sums have been lost. The colony has also gone to considerable expense in opening up roads in gold fields, and has also spent large sums in waterraces and other works, and in helping the goldfields industry. These sums have been ex-pended under Ministerial departments. We also find that other mines are now being opened up in the colony. Our coal-mining industry is gradually but surely increasing, and we have also hopes of seeing extensive copper mines opened up in the Nelson Provincial District; and I believe that there are other mines in the colony which only require to be developed. If we look to other colonies we see, especially in New South Wales, that this large industry is being developed vigor-ously, and that the returns from their mines now amount to about two millions a year. Looking at the profitable nature of the industry if it is efficiently looked after, we think this proposal is one which must tend to the advantage of the colony. We think the Mines Department should be placed under the charge of one Minister, who should give his whole attention to the subject, instead of, as at present, having to also look after lands, or education, or some other department of equal importance. It would be his duty to visit the various mining centres, to see for himself what work is being done, and also to see what can be done for the further development of the mining industry,

and make himself thoroughly acquainted with the subject. Owing to the time which this matter has been before Parliament, there is no doubt that every member will have made up his mind on the subject, and therefore it is not necessary for me to make further remarks. I simply move the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. SUTTER.—Sir, I am very much disap pointed that the Government should press this Bill forward at this period of the session. The Premier has told us that it is not necessary to give many reasons why the Bill should be passed; but my opinion is that there is no necessity for the Bill at all, and therefore it is difficult to give reasons for passing it. We are promised non-political Boards for the management of our railways, a proposal which I shall support with all the force I can when it comes before us; and we are also told that we are to have local government extended next session in such a way that this House will be relieved of half the business it has to do now. Besides this, we know that the Government has been carrying on the business of the House and the country, including the management of the railways, the management of hospitals and charitable aid, and the county system. They have disposed of all this business while the session has been going on, and yet we are told that they want a new Minister when the session is about to end. It seems to me that the work might easily be done by the number of Ministers at present authorized, and I do not see the slightest necessity for this Bill, and I feel satisfied that this is the opinion of two-thirds of the members of this House. There is a continual cry out in this House on the part of gold-fields members for justice. One calls upon the Government to reduce the gold duty; another wants them to reduce the price of business licenses; another wants them to reduce the miners' rights: in fact, the cry is, "Reduce everything"—so that the miners might pay nothing. Why, Sir, the fact of the matter is that, I think, it would have been far better for the colony if we had never had a digger in it, and I am satisfied that a great number of members are of the same opinion. The gold-fields industry should be encouraged in moderation, no doubt; but I have been over the gold fields, and I say the money has been squandered in every possible way. There was a hundred thousand pounds spent on a water-race at Kumara, and the expenditure has proved absolutely useless. The member from that part of the district tells us that the miners never asked for that expenditure, and that they knew it to be useless. They may say that now, but they did not say that at the time the money was asked for. I trust the House will simply refuse to pass the Bill. Mr. BARRON.—Sir, as this is one of those

measures the value of which to the Government might be seriously impaired if disposed of too hurriedly, and as it appears that many honourable members desire time to enable them to consider the subject, I venture to move the adjournment of the debate until this day fortnight. I hope the Government will see their way to consent to this course, so that we may proceed to business for which we are better prepared. Perhaps, meantime, some readjustment of Ministerial portfolios might enable Government to make other special provision for the administration of the important Department of Mines.

Mr. LEVESTAM .-- I beg to second the motion for the adjournment of the debate. The Premier, in moving the second reading of the Bill, said it was unnecessary to address the. House at any length upon the subject, because no doubt every member had made up his mind. I think so too, and therefore we may as well go to the vote at once. The honourable gentleman also said that no Minister in the past had been able to devote his whole time to this particular industry, and therefore he asks for a new Minister to be created. But the same may be said of several branches of the Government service; yet there is no proposal to appoint special Ministers to these. His argument in favour of the Bill seemed to me to be a very poor one. The session is almost past, and the Government have been able to work through it with one Minister short; and therefore I do not see why they should now ask for another Minister, irrespective of the portfolio they have yet to fill.

Mr. PEACOCK.—I shall support the adjournment of the debate. I feel sure that most members think there is no necessity for any appointment of this kind. If the dobate is adjourned for a fortnight, of course it will, of necessity, be adjourned for a much longer

period.

Sir G. GREY.—I simply wish to state that, if this Bill goes into Committee I shall propose to substitute the words "two permanent Undersecretaries" for the words "additional Minister." I think that would give the Government all the strength they require for carrying on the public service, and also initiate a system which

would be of great benefit to the colony. Sir J. VOGEL.—The amendment of which the honourable member for Auckland East has given notice—the substitution of two permanent Under-Secretaries for the proposed additional Minister—is one which the Government will be quite willing to consider in Committee. The Government said so before, when a similar proposition was before the House. We consider that a larger amount of Ministerial assistance is necessary for carrying on the business of the country; and that idea is not singular to the present Government, for a former Government held a similar idea. It is not with a view to obtaining larger parlia-mentary support that we make this proposi-tion, or we should have brought it forward earlier in the session; but because we honestly believe that the work before the Government is of so heavy a nature that it is extremely desirable we should have more assistance when the session is over. When we come to think of all that requires to be done in Wellington in the way of making preparations for next session, and in visiting various parts of the colony—for some Ministers will have to be absent from Wellington for a considerable portion of their time — we are impressed with the fact that a larger amount of assistance is required. I therefore trust that honourable members will allow this Bill to be read a second time. Of course, adjourning the debate for a fortnight means adjourning it size die.

Mr. DUNCAN.—I hope the Government are not serious about this proposal to appoint another Minister. They have now in their hands the power of appointing another Minister. Why not fill up that vacancy with a Minister of Mines, if such a Minister is so urgently required? I hope the Government will not press the Bill.

Debate adjourned.

# MAIL SERVICE WITH ENGLAND.

The House went into Committee of the Whole to consider the terms and conditions of a proposed contract between the Postmaster General of New Zealand and the New Zealand Shipping Company for the conveyance of mails between Plymouth and New Zealand by the

company's direct steamers.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I will not detain the House with lengthy remarks about this contract. It has been in the hands of honourable members for some days. Briefly, I may say it is to secure a fortnightly means of communication to and from Great Britain for mail purposes. There was a time when the colony was content with a four-weekly service; but, since the neighbouring colonies have now a weekly service for business purposes, it is not sufficient for this colony to confine itself to a four-weekly service. Then arises the question, Should we allow a very considerable sum of money to be diverted to services carried on in the neighbouring Continent of Australia, which are only indirectly a benefit to us, or should we take advantage of the splendid steamers which are now running direct between New Zealand and the Mothercountry? I do not think there can be any doubt that we should endeavour to place the moneys which we are spending for the alternative service at the disposal of those companies which are doing, have done, and will do very much benefit to New Zealand. I might detain the Committee a long while, and yet not exhaust the subject on the various advantages, direct and indirect, which will arise to the colony from the steam communication we are now enjoying with Great Britain. But those advantages are so manifold and manifest that it is clearly not necessary for me dwell upon them. Then, with regard to the nature of the contract. It is proposed to leave the company to choose any port of arrival and departure. It is bound simply to choose one of four ports -Auckland, Wellington, Port Lyttelton, or Port Chalmers. Then, as regards the speed. Allowing for a detention of thirty-six hours each way for coaling purposes, the service provided is one which amounts to nearly thirteen knots per hour. When we consider for how long a period, and up to how recent a period, the mail services of other countries—notably the Penin-

Mr. Barron

salar and Oriental service—were carried on at a speed of ten knots and less an hour, it will be seen what an astonishing improvement has been made in steam services when it is possible for us to make, on the moderate terms proposed in this contract, an arrangement for a service of between twelve and thirteen knots an hour. excluding the time for coaling. Then, as regards the payment which is to be made for this service. The payment is based upon the same terms as the payment made to the Orient Company by the New South Wales Government. That is a payment which leaves some substantial margin between the actual amount of receipts and the amounts paid to the com-pany. The contract is for five years, but there is a provision, in case the postages are reduced at any time before the end of five years, that there should be a revision of the price paid to the company. As regards other provisions, they are generally based on the same plan as the direct San Francisco service. The penalties for non-arrival and the bonuses for arrival in anticipation of the times are fixed at £4 and £5 respectively, as in the San Francisco service. There are the usual provisions for the protection of the Government in regard to the survey of the vessels, and arrangements of that kind. We give to the company the right to use one port for departure and arrival, free of harbour dues—a power which the Government have, notwithstanding the fact that the harbours are in the hands of separate Boards throughout the colony. That power we have in our hands to give to mail steamers, and we are exercising it to this moderate extent. I believe honourable members will be glad to think that, at this not heavy sacrifice, we are throwing in the way of the local company the money that would otherwise go out of the country to the Australian services. As far as these Australian services are concerned, whilst it will still be possible to send letters by them, the rate of postage is increased, so that we shall not lose by the transmission of letters by those services, as we have done hitherto. Communication with London has been made to that effect; but no reply has been received. It is, however, hardly within the province of the Home authorities to object to our imposing the extra amount proposed on letters by Aus-Letters not specially addressed will be divided between the San Francisco service and this new service. Letters specially directed will of course go by the service by which they are directed to go. I now move, That the contract be approved.

Mr. MACANDREW.—I should like very well

Mr. MACANDREW.—I should like very well if the honourable member would explain what arrangements have been made with regard to the other company. There are two lines, as we are aware, both of them having splendid steamers. We know the other line is building steamers quite equal to those of the New Zealand company. I should be very sorry to say anything that might be misconstrued as anything like a hostile animus towards the New Zealand Shipping Company, to which I think we are very much indebted, and

of which I think the colony ought to feel proud. They have shown very great energy pluck, and enterprise, and are deserving of every consideration at our hands. At the same time, I should not be prepared to give any one company a monopoly, and, had I not been assured that arrangements had been made by which the contract will be divided between the two companies, I do not know that I should agree to the ratification of the contract. Although nothing of the kind appears on the face of the contract, I think it is well that the existence of this arrangement should be understood and made public. I do not know whether the honourable gentleman has made any calculation as to the probable amount of this subsidy as years go on. I see that the contract is for five years. Letters are to be paid for at the rate of £1,344 per ton; packets, £112 per ton; news-papers, £56 per ton. Has any calculation been made as to what that is likely to realize per month or fortnight? It would be very interesting to the Committee if we had any idea of that. My impression is that it will amount to a very large sum by-and-by. I do not grudge it by any means, but I think it will amount to a very large subsidy. I should have been glad if it were possible to put some provision in the contract by which the company would be compelled, for example, to use New Zealand coal, provided it is supplied at the same price as other coal. The same might be done with regard to provisions. There might be a condition that they should use New Zealand mutton, beef, potatoes, and all the rest. There is no doubt that both the rival companies deserve consideration at our hands. I do not know much about the Shaw-Savill Company, but the Albion Company has been in the trade for the last twenty-six years, and has landed some thirty-five thousand souls in this colony.

Sir J. VOGEL.—With regard to the remarks of the honourable member for Port Chalmers, I would say that there is no one more entitled than the honourable member to be considered the father of the steam services in this colony for a very long period past. There is no doubt that it is to the honourable gentleman's action that we owe the San Francisco service. Then, again, in 1878, he pointed out how urgently it was needed that the colony should have a direct steam service with England. After that the Government entered into negotiations, when I was Agent-General, for the establishment of a direct steam service, and it was then proposed, or asked, that a very large subsidy should be given. Negotiations were continued, after I ceased to be Agent-General, under the present Agent-General; and, while these negotiations were going on, the New Zealand Shipping Company, with a rare amount of enterprise and courage, started a service without any subsidy-started a service not upon the basis of slow steamers, but with all the advantages and appliances which the most matured knowledge and experience had placed at command of those who entered into such a business. They gave us, in fact, a very fast service.

At the same time the service to which the honourable gentleman referred-to which, no doubt, the colony is very largely indebted, the Province of Otago especially—this Albion service, became united to the business carried on by a private company-Shaw, Savill, and Co. and the two together became a new company; and that company has also entered into the steam service. Before this contract could have been made—that is to say, before we could have made such a contract—if there had been competition between these two companies, it would have been necessary for us to say that we could obtain a contract at suchand-such a price from one company and at such-and-such a price from another; and I am obliged to the honourable member for Port Chalmers for enabling me to make the explanation that the two companies have entered into such an arrangement as enables us to make this contract with the New Zealand Shipping Company, the local company, which has for that reason something more of our sympathies, apart from the gratitude for the services of foreign companies in years past. That arrangement enables us to make a contract with the New Zealand Shipping Company without offending, or overlooking, or treating with neglect the other company, since these two companies have entered into a certain agreement—of which, I may say, we have not an official knowledge. However, they have entered into such an agreement as has left it to the New Zealand Shipping Company to make this contract without opposition from the other company. That, Sir, I think, meets the point mentioned by the honourable gentleman. With regard to the point about the coal: no one will be more glad than I shall be to see that New Zealand coal is used; but I am too much accustomed to business to think that it would be desirable or necessary to place a provision in the con-tract that New Zealand coal should be used in preference to other coal, if New Zealand coal can be obtained with greater advantage. We may be quite sure that, if our coal can be obtained with greater advantage, the com-pany will use it; but, if it cannot be so pro-cured, then we should have to place a clause in the contract to cover the risks of loss from having to use New Zealand coal. Whilst we may feel sure that, under this contract, if New Zealand coal can be supplied at cheaper rates than other coal, they will use it; yet, if they were compelled to do so, it would give such a power to those working coal-mines that the effect would almost certainly be that the shipping companies would have to pay more for New Zealand coal than otherwise. The House has shown no stint whatever in regard to provision for working the coal mines of New Zealand, and their success must depend on the ability of the owners to supply local coal on terms more favourable than coal can be obtained from Australia. I do not think that it would be desirable or advantageous to place any condition in contracts of this kind which would create an artificial demand for the coal,

Mail Service

when, as far as we are able to see, and have been assured over and over again in this. House, New Zcaland will be able to compete with other countries in the matter of supplying coal if left to the natural operation of supply and demand.

with England.

Mr. PEACOCK.—I think the general opinion was, when this matter was discussed before, that it was a wise thing to encourage an alternate service with the San Francisco service such as that now proposed. I also agree that the New Zealand company are well entitled to have precedence in the matter of making a contract with the Government, inasmuch as they have shown such enterprise and public spirit in the inception of this direct steam service. I know, as a matter of fact, that the company are desirous of taking New Zealand coal, and I believe the same remark applies with regard to provisions. As it is a company whose head-quarters are at Christchurch, that should make it all the more necessary to guard against the tendency of these steamers to come to one or two ports only, instead of the various ports mentioned in one paragraph of the proposed contract. I think it would be a wise thing if a stipulation were made that their steamers should call a certain number of times at each port throughout the year. I shall be glad to hear from the Colonial Treasurer if he will make a stipulation in this contract that, instead of leaving it with the contractors to say that the steamers will call at either of several ports, the steamers should be made to call at least a certain number of times in each year at each of these various ports. Of course, in making such a proposi-tion, I do not lose sight of the fact that they must look to the port where a return cargo is likely to be procured. But it not unfrequently happens at present that these steamers bring cargo to one port and load up for the homeward trip at another. If such an arrangement were made as I have suggested, it would give satisfaction to the leading commercial

centres of the colony.

One of the colony.

One of the colony. mated amount which this subsidy will be worth, as far as we can see, supposing the mail matter not to increase from the present amount, that is to say, taking the present mail matter as the basis of calculation, it would amount to about £13,000 a year which the company will receive, and that will be more than covered by the postal receipts. That, Sir, is irrespective of the amount to be received or paid under the bonus and penalty clause. With regard to the remark about fixing the port, it has always been considered desirable to leave to the contractors the question of selecting their own ports. It must depend upon the business inducements which are offered. The time is placed at a certain limit, and it must be left to the company to select the ports. If they were to select Auckland very often, no doubt it would be less advantageous to the rest of the colony, as there would be a delay in the delivery of letters to the other parts of the colony; and, considering that the San Francisco mail goes.



to Auckland under contract, I hardly think it is vary considerate of the honourable member to suggest that any condition should be placed in this contract compelling them to go to Auckland oftener than business renders necessary. I dare say the honourable gentleman would be surprised if a Dunedin member should suggest that the San Francisco steamers should sometimes go to Dunedin, Lyttelton, and Wellington, instead of always to Auckland, the nearest port. We must leave the question of ports to be decided by the contractors as business makes it necessary or desirable.

Mr. HATCH.—I notice, Sir, that the first port of call is absolutely omitted, and, even though they might not be desirous of calling there during the first or second year, yet there is not the slightest doubt that before the end of the term of five years the Bluff Harbour will be the first and most important port, as far as mail service is concerned, in this colony. The Bluff Harbour is fast becoming a special coaling station from the West Coast, being the nearest port of call for coal vessels coming to deposit their cargoes. Wharfage is available; there is no bar; and, next to Wellington, Lyttelton, and Auckland, it is the most important port the colony has, or is likely to have. I should therefore like to see the Bluff put in, as well as the other ports mentioned. With that addition the contract would have my hearty

Mr. O'CONOR. — I feel that the Colonial Treasurer must somewhat misapprehend the question in regard to the supply of coal. It is not sought, I believe, by those who have the interests of the coal industry at heart to obtain a monopoly of the coal trade at any price exceeding that at which it is brought to this colony; but I do think that, in giving a subsidy to a company such as this, something should be done to guard against a great injury being done to an industry which is now struggling, and which in a short time will be per-fectly independent of any obstacles thrown in its way. I should be perfectly satisfied if a clause were introduced that, if coal was ob-tainable at the same price and of equal quality, the preference should be given to our native coal. I am sure this would be accepted by the New Zealand Shipping Company at the present time, and I feel that it would be a very great advantage to the colony and to that particular industry to which I refer. It is not at all improbable that during the course of the next two or three years, before the harbours on the West Coast are finished, circumstances may arise which may induce the owners of large vessels running between here and New South Wales to bring over large quantities of coal, so as to secure to themselves the trade between Australia and here. The inducement would be to force the trade on this company. Although they might not be able to sell the coal more cheaply than the colonial coal could be supplied, they might be able to offer to the company such advantages as would induce it to take away from the colonial industry temporarily all assistance,

which would not only be injurious to the coalproducers here, but would also cause a loss to the colony of an amount which would more than counterbalance the sum to be paid in the way of subsidy. I understand that the quantity of coal consumed by this company now is about eighteen thousand tons a year. The profit to our revenue on a supply of that quantity would be £2,700, and that would be lost to the colony if by any chance a contract were taken by the company for the supply of Newcastle coal even at an equal price. The result would be a loss of £2,700, which would go far towards aiding in paying the interest on the loans to be raised for the improve-ment of the West Coast harbours. This would be a further loss from the fact that it would stop the expenditure of £21,396 in raising and delivering the coal. As this company is to have what may virtually be called a monopoly, I think we should ask, in return, that, all things being equal, they should give our coal the preference. I should be satisfied with that, and, unless the Government insist on no alteration being made in the agreement, I would ask them to insert words to the following effect:. "the vessels to give preference to New Zcaland coal, provided the same be supplied at equal price with Newcastle coal, and be of equal. quality." I would ask the Colonial Treasurer to endeavour to protect our industry at its inception. We do not ask anything in the way of a protective tariff as against the company. All we ask for is fair-play, and that this industry shall not be stopped in its early stage by circumstances which I will not detain the House by referring to in detail, but which might almost compel the Shipping Company to enter into contracts for the supply of New-

Mr. MACANDREW.—I confess that at first sight I was induced to take the view which the honourable gentleman has taken, but on further consideration I think we had better be content with the thing as it is. When we are told by the Colonial Treasurer that we are to have a four-weekly service for £13,000 a year, I think we may very well congratulate ourselves on making such a good bargain. Indeed, I am rather surprised that the company should have agreed to come under the restrictions contained in this contract for the sake of the money to be paid. I can only say that if I had been the company I should not have done so. I think there is sufficient patriotism on the part of the company to induce them to use New Zealand coal in preference to any other. But there is another point to be considered, and it is that,. as soon as you get the Westport Harbour sufficiently deepened to admit vessels drawing 20ft., the coal company will have no difficulty in getting rid of its coal. That is the object to be aimed at, and then you will have the markets. of the world open to you, and you need fear no competition on the part of the Newcastle

Mr. SHRIMSKI.—I hope the Committee will not agree to the proposal of the honourable member for the Buller to compel the Shipping.

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Company to take its coal from Westport, for you might as well compel them to take their grain from Oamaru. There is a question I should like to ask the Colonial Treasurer. I see that the company are to be paid 12s. a pound for carrying the letters, and, as there are 16oz. to the pound, the return would be 16s. Would the balance of 4s. defray the costs of the Postal

Department? Sir J. VOGEL.—The proposed arrangement would leave a margin in favour of the department. With regard to the remarks of the honourable member for Invercargill, I quite agree with him as to the future prospects of the Bluff Harbour; and no doubt the day will come when it will be one of the most important harbours in the colony. I see no objection to inserting it amongst the ports of call; and I do not suppose that the companies would object either, for it is optional with them to choose their ports of call. The Bluff is certainly only twelve hours' steaming from Port Chalmers; but that is no reason why their discretion should be limited. The honourable member for the Buller certainly has the interests of the coal trade very much at heart; but I do not think that we should put in the contract such a condition as he proposes, although it looks so innocent. It would simply be providing the coal companies with the means of "cornering" the Shipping Company, if I may use an Americanism. Inasmuch as contracts for the supply of coal have to be made in advance, if the Shipping Company were to say to the coal companies, "What will you supply us with coal for?" the coal companies would say, "We will see;" and then, unless the Shipping Company had taken the precaution of securing a supply of imported coal, they might be asked too much for the local coal. On the other hand, if the Shipping Company had a supply of imported coal, the local company might, under the clause proposed by the honourable gentleman, come to them at the last moment and say, "You are getting imported coal at, say, £1: we will supply it at 19s. 11d.;" and then the imported coal would be useless to the Shipping Company, as it would deteriorate through lying by. Such a proposal as the honourable gentleman makes could be used to extort money in that way. Of course the honourable gentleman does not intend it to operate in that way, but we all know how little temptation it requires to induce persons in trade to make money by sharp practices. Besides that, without making any such stipulation, if local coal can be supplied at even a penny preference over imported coal, it will be used. The House can do no more than give the coal-producers an opportunity of producing their coal as cheaply as possible. Coal is a great factor in every-day life, and we want no restrictions on its use, if the local producers can, with all the advan-tages which the Legislature has given them, compete honestly and openly with imported coal: on the other hand, if they cannot compete, we want no artificial means of increasing the cost of coal.

Mr. Shrimski

Mr. BARRON.—I observe that this is a forty-five days' service, and that there is a bonus of £5 an hour for every hour gained, while the penalty is only £4 an hour for every hour lost. Of course the bonus will be paid for every hour gained, whereas the penalty may not be, and is not likely to be, enforced, as it is in the discretion of the Postmaster-General. Now, the honourable member for Port Chalmers said that we were getting the service for £13,000 a year; but I would point out that the company has hitherto been making a forty days' service of it, and, as we are only contracting for a forty-five days' service, the £5 an hour will have to be paid to the company for every trip, and they will make £600 a trip by it. That is to say, they will make over £7,000 a year in addition to the subsidy, if they continue to carry on the service as they have hitherto done.

Sir J. VOGEL.—The honourable gentleman is mixing the two services. I do not think there has been any occasion on which the passage out has been made in forty days. The contract is forty-five days from England, and

forty-two days Home.

Mr. BARRON.—I am under the impression that the passage out has been made in forty days. Indeed, that time is really quite slow enough for a satisfactory mail service. I only wish to point out that we shall have to pay about £20,000 a year for this service. There is another point on which I should like some information from the honourable gentleman, and that is with regard to the rates which are charged under clause 15. I should like to know what proportion of the rates is retained by the colony—that is to say, what the colony is to get for the letters and newspapers, and so on, which the service is to carry.

Mr. STOUT.—It the honourable gentleman will allow me to explain, I may say that it is impossible that the speed which has been made on some of the voyages of these steamers can be kept up, if the company is to pay any attention to the passenger traffic. Already complaints have been made of the steamers going too far south, and having to encounter very rough weather in consequence; and if they have to keep farther to the north it will lengthen the passage. As to the gain or loss to the colony on the rates, honourable gentlemen will observe that 12s. a pound is to be paid for the carriage of letters, and that, on the supposition that every person who posts a letter puts in a letter of exactly half an ounce in weight, we should gain 4s. a pound; but we know very well that most of the letters are under that weight: so that the colony will be receiving from 16s. to 20s. for what we have to pay 12s. for.

Sir J. VOGEL.—No doubt the company may make considerable sums out of the bonus, if they think it desirable; but it is well known to those who have had anything to do with steamers that it is the last knot or half-knot which causes the expenditure of coal. We have had practical proof of that in connection with the San Francisco service, where it has been shown that it does not pay to run at

extra speed even for the increased subsidy. The bonuses the contractors for that service have received have been very small comparatively. The steamers are required to travel at a speed of about thirteen knots an hour, and I do not know of any general service for so long a distance where such a rate of speed is stipulated for. If they exceed that they will be well entitled to a bonus. In reply to the honourable member for Port Chalmers, I would say that there is no question in my mind that the present mail matter for the month will be very greatly increased when we have a fort-nightly service. But the calculation is based on the present mail matter. With regard to the amount the colony will gain by the rate of 12s. a pound, I am sorry to say that the figures are not in my hands at this moment.

Mr. MACANDREW.—Supposing the Panama

Canal is open within the next five years, and the vessels make short passages by that route, we might be paying too much a year for the service. I do not know whether that is a contingency within the range of practicability that we should consider or not, but it raises up a

very important point.

Mr. PEACOCK.—Would there be any objection to making the contract for three years instead of five? We all know the rapid progress that is being made in regard to steam vessels and their rate of speed, and five years seems a long time, and it might be thought desirable before the end of that period to make some alteration in the contract.

Mr. ROLLESTON. - What amount is received by the Imperial Government for postages

Sir J. VOGEL. - Twopence. halfpenny a letter is received for carrying letters via Brindisi or San Francisco, as the case may be. We cannot suppose that they will ask anything of the kind for the direct steamers. I assume they will ask the ordinary penny a letter, and give us the balance.

Mr. LAKE.—I see by the 22nd clause of this contract that the steam vessels employed in the service are to be exempt from light dues at New Zealand ports. Does the same exemption

apply to the San Francisco steamers?

Sir J. VOGEL.—They get the light-dues exemption. This service will also be exempt from payment of light dues. The term of the contract is five years. The company is really at the mercy of the colonists. If a more rapid service were established by Panama, and it suited the people to send their letters by that route, it would be open to them to address their letters by Panama, and the amount this company would receive will be reduced in proportion. It is open to the steamers to go by Panama; they are not bound to go by any route.

Mr. PEACOCK. — Are the harbour dues re-

mitted to the San Francisco boats?

Sir J. VOGEL.—I think they are in regard

to the Auckland Harbour.

Mr. ROSS.—I presume the harbour dues will not include the harbour dues on the cargo. Mr. STOUT .- No.

Panama there would be a saving in time of some seven days, and that would mean a difference of £10,000 a year. I think paying the mail steamers according to the mail matter carried is the only true way of dealing with the matter. When the question was before the House some years ago, it was proposed to pay £40,000 a year for a direct steam service. pointed out at the time that the principle was a bad one. We reduced the vote by £20,000; but, owing to a jealousy amongst the companies, nothing came of the proposal. We have, notwithstanding that fact, a direct steam. service without a subsidy. I look upon the principle of paying for results as the proper one to adopt. I consider the proposed arrange-ment a reasonable one, and I shall not oppose it. It seems that the colony will receive a fair profit out of the transaction.

with England.

Mr. SUTTER.—I think the present proposal is a step in the right direction. The splendid. fleets of steamers we have now are well worthy of our support. I object to the present extravagant price we are paying for the San Francisco service. There will be a difference between the cost of that service and of the present service of £20,000 a year. I trust the House will agree to the proposal, on the understanding that the San Francisco service will be similarly treated—that the mails will be paid for by weight, and not by subsidy as at present.

Resolution agreed to, and reported to the-

Mr. SMITH .- I would point out that therewas no provision in this contract for the steamers calling at Napier. At the present time the mails arrive at Auckland on a Saturday. or Sunday, and they are delivered in Napier on the following Saturday. I suppose it will be the same with regard to the proposed service. The mails will arrive in Wellington, and it will be a considerable time before we get the mails at Napier, unless some special provision. is made.

Sir J. VOGEL.—The Government will make the best provision possible for delivering the mails all over the colony on the arrival of the steamers. When the breakwater which it is proposed to construct at Napier is completed, I am sure that port will not be omitted from future mail contracts. That undertaking is not likely to be completed much within the next five years, so that we may leave this matter for the next contract.

Resolution agreed to.

### WELLINGTON HOSPITAL.

On resolutions being reported from Committee of Supply,

Dr. NEWMAN said that, while the estimates were being considered, an honourable member had made a statement which reflected on the Wellington Hospital, to the effect that delirious patients were allowed to run at large. It might seem to be an unimportant matter, but really this was a very serious charge, and he was glad to be able to say it was not true. The real facts Colonel TRIMBLE.—If the vessels went by were these: that the lunatic asylum and the

hospital were on contiguous blocks of land. \* Sometimes harmless lunatics were allowed to work in the lunatic-asylum grounds, and one day one of these men took it into his head to go across to the hospital. He was immediately seen by his attendant and brought back. This circumstance was the sole foundation for the very serious charge that had been made. The fact was, the hospital was well managed, and the honourable gentleman who asserted to the contrary was wide of the facts.

Mr. SEDDON said it was he who had made the statement, and he adhered to it. It was not a lunatic of whom he spoke, but a hospital patient suffering from delirium, who was allowed to wander about the grounds.

Resolutions reported, and agreed to.

# SUPPLY.

On the motion for going into Committee of :Supply,

Sir J. VOGEL said,—I wish to make a few remarks with reference to the supplementary estimates which have been brought down this The heaviest item is the additional vote for education. Some members may not be-pleased to see this; but it is to provide for in--creased attendances at the schools, and there is no help for it but to pass the additional amount. Most of the other items will explain themselves. But there is one item of so much general interest to the country and to the House that I think it right to call special attention to it. will be in the recollection of honourable members that, a few nights ago, the proposal to establish a company for the purpose of carrying on commercial relations with the South Sea Islands was thrown out. But the Govern-ment thought it would be a great pity to relinquish altogether the South Sea Island trade, and it occurred to them that probably a good deal might be done in the way of encouraging that trade by establishing a ser-vice—we can hardly call it a mail service, for it would be more in the nature of a commer--cial service - between New Zealand and the islands. Therefore an amount appears on the estimates for the purpose of establishing a service between New Zealand and the South Sea Islands. The amount put down for it That is an estimate of what, more or less, may have to be paid up to the 31st March next; but it is not possible for us to say absolutely what it will come to. The service, we think, will cost about £5,000 a year, more or less. Now, as regards the service it is proposed to establish, it will, I think, be the means of bringing New Zealand into important commercial relations with the South Sea Islands. The intention is that a boat should start from Port Chalmers, to call at Lyttelton, then at Wellington, then at Napier, and then at Auckland; from Auckland it should proceed to the Tonga Islands, from the Tonga Islands to Samoa, from Samoa to Tahiti, and back again to Auckland, and through the coastal ports of New Zealand.

Tahiti first, from Tahiti to Samoa, from Samoa to Tonga, and from Tonga back to Auckland. In either case it is proposed that the service shall be once in two months-in other words, that there shall be six services in the year. Provision will also be made so that, by a very few months' notice, the service can be discontinued. The amount that is asked is so small, and the results may be so large in the way of establishing important commercial relations between the various ports of New Zea-land and these islands, which are now out-side the communication which Australia holds with Fiji and New Caledonia, that I cannot help thinking it would be gratifying to honourable members and to the country to know that we propose to establish this service. Before I conclude, there is another matter which I wish to refer to; and honourable members will understand that it is incumbent upon me to do so. At an earlier period of the session, in the course of a debate upon the reason why there was a delay in the delivery of Nelson mails for two months, the honourable member for Nelson expressed himself very strongly in reference to the memoranda of the Secretary to the Post Office. He said that the Secretary to the Post Office had not only been guilty of a misstatement, but had made a misstatement knowing it to be untrue. The honourable member will understand the feeling which I have, as head of the department, not to allow an officer of the department, who is unable to defend himself, to remain under the aspersion which is contained in the remarks of the honourable gentleman reported in Hansard. It is quite unnecessary to raise any debate on the subject, but I merely wish to say this: that the memoranda in question, to which the honourable gentleman referred, were memoranda made by the Secretary to the Post Office to the Postmaster-General of the time, the honourable member for Hawke's Bay (Captain Russell). Captain Russell showed the memoranda to Mr. Levestam, the honourable member for Nelson. It was not necessary that he should do so, but he showed the memoranda to Mr. Levestam, and it was concerning those memoranda that the honourable gentleman made the remarks which I have mentioned. Now, with regard to the calculations made, Mr. Gray, the officer in question, took into account, rightly or wrongly, the delay which, upon these two occasions, he considered would have taken place owing to the state of the tide in Nelson, Nelson being a tidal harbour. He took into consideration all details, and came to the conclusion he did, and which was reported to the head of the department. I have the to the head of the department. permission of the honourable member (Captain Russell) to say on his behalf, as I say on my own, that, having looked into the circumstances, we are quite convinced that, if there was any error in Mr. Gray's computation, it was certainly not an intentional error. I may say I have known that gentleman a long time, and I feel that he is quite incapable of inten-Or the service may 30, instead of from Auck-land to the Tonga Islands, from Auckland to I think other honourable gentlemen who have tionally making a misstatement, in which view

Dr. Newman

[HOUSE.]

also known him for long will entirely concur. I hope the honourable member for Nelson will be generous enough not to object to my having made this statement to clear a gentleman who is unable to defend himself here: not as to the point whether he was correct in his computation, or as to whether or not he ought to have taken the state of the fide into account in these two cases—that is perfectly immaterial. The one point I wish to place on record in Hansard is the affirmation that the gentleman in question was not capable of making, and did not make, an intentional misrepresentation. I will not detain the House longer, but propose that we go into Committee on the estimates.

Mr. LEVESTAM. - In replying to the remarks the Colonial Treasurer has made just now, I wish to say that I exceedingly regret that, during the heat of debate, I should have given expression to language which, perhaps, in calm moments, I should not have made use of. The memoranda to which the honourable gentleman refers, the then Postmaster-General showed me. I asked him if it was shown in the way of confidence, and he replied, No. I do not wish to say anything more about the matter, but am quite content to let it rest.

Mr. SMITH.—As it is not in the power of the Committee to make an increase on these estimates, I should like to point out to the Government that, whereas the Chairmen of the other Committees—that is to say, the Public Petitions Committee and the Native Affairs Committee — receive each £100, the Chairman of the Waste Lands Committee, in which this session the work has been unquestionably severe, is not down for £100, as are the other Chairmen. It would be only fair to give that Chairman the same as the other Chairmen of Committees. We have had this session one very heavy case, which lasted a great many days - the famous Shag Point Colliery case; and I hope the Government will see their way, if not on these estimates, in some manner to provide for the Chairman of the Waste Lands Committee.

Mr. MACANDREW.—Sir, before you leave the chair, I wish to move the resolution standing in my name on Supplementary Order Paper 23, which is as follows:-

"That the Government be requested to prepare a measure during the recess to enable loans through the Public Trustee or otherwise to be made, at a low rate of interest, to local bodies for drainage works, and to actual cultivators of the soil for material improvements."

Although this resolution embodies a question which, perhaps, next to that of local government, ought to be regarded as one of the most vitally-important questions of the day, and although it is one upon which a good deal may be said, yet, looking at the Order Paper and at the state of the public business, I think it will be more pleasing to honourable members if I say nothing at all or a very few words upon it. In fact, I shall be content to take a division without a discussion if the House so desires it. I think it must be admitted that there will be no dispute that one of the greatest drawbacks

which the progress and prosperity of the colony labour under is the high rate of interest. think the high rate for money is, more especially as regards the agricultural interest, one of the greatest difficulties which it is now labouring under; and I feel assured that, if action is taken in the direction embodied in this resolution, the cultivators of the soil will be able to obtain money for one-half the rates they are now paying, and probably for less. The other day, it will be remembered, I put a question as to the establishment of a State land bank of a similar kind to the State land banks which exist in India; and, by the way, I may say that my honourable friend the member for the Taieri has informed me that a relative of his who is residing in India has intimated to him that such a bank does exist there, and that it has been productive of enormous benefits to that country. I was very glad to hear from the Government that they would make inquiries upon the subject, and I hope these inquiries may result in the establishment of such a bank, and that they may have the desired effect. As, however, this may involve difficulties and delay, I have thought the next best thing to do would be to make some such provision as is indicated in this resolution. I am convinced, as I said before, that the rate of interest could be very greatly reduced. The Public Trustee holds large sums in his hands, and I see no reason why arrangements might not be made for money in England that cannot be invested in Consols-that cannot be invested excepting in real propertyfinding its way here to a very large extent. I believe that in England money to an enormous extent is seeking investment, and cannot get more than 2½ or 3 per cent. This is a subject worthy of consideration by this House, and I hope the House will agree with the resolution I now propose.

Mr. HOLMES.—If the motion requires a seconder, I have very great pleasure in seconding it. The honourable member for Port Chalmers has brought before the House a most important and most practical reform, and one which all agriculturists throughout the country would hail with the greatest pos-sible delight if it were carried, and one which, I have not the slightest doubt, the Colonial Treasurer, if he will set his mind to it, can give effect to, and give effect to in such a way as to confer a very great boon upon this colony. He has already carried out one of the things which have been preached upon public platforms as being a necessary reform—namely, the doing away with that absurd thing called the Sinking Fund; and now, if he will do this, he will have conferred two great benefits on this colony, and his name will be held in the highest honour for generations to come. The interest that is paid at the present time upon private loans, amounting to £15,000,000, borrowed, not in the colony, but from foreign capitalists, and upon which the borrowers have to pay an average interest of 8 per cent., amounts to some £1,200,000. If the honourable gentleman causes the Trust Funds of the colony to be invested. in these mortgages, he can reduce the interest these people have to pay to £600,000 per annum; and he will thus cause a saving to this colony of many thousands of pounds at pre-sent abroad to foreigners. The effect of that will not be confined to the mortgagors; but, as soon as he reduces the rate of interest that is customary, and has fixed the Government rate at something like 4 per cent., he will find that all the monetary institutions will have to reduce their rates, and that, where people are now paying something like 10 per cent., they will possibly have to pay 6 per cent.; so that there will be a saving throughout the colony to the industrial classes, who form the bone and sinew of the country, of at least 4 per cent. That will be a saving to the industrial community of, at the very least, £1,200,000 per annum. This motion is one of the most practical character, tending to the development of industries. The Hon. the Treasurer, when he spoke at Ashburton, told the colonists that he was here for the purpose of showing them various ways of advancing the interests of the country—of promoting the local industries of the country. He has already done a very great deal in that direction. I give him credit for that. Here is another opening for him, and I say that he can do nothing of greater importance towards developing the interests of the country than by carrying out this proposal of the honourable member for Port Chalmers to reduce the price of money from 8 per cent. to 4½ or 5 per cent. If he does that, he will confer so great a boon on the colonists that they will hold his memory in reverence for

many years to come.
Sir J. VOGEL. — I should be sorry to see a discussion take place upon this resolution, although I quite agree with the observation of the honourable member for Port Chalmers and the honourable member for Christchurch South that it deals with a subject of very large importance. But, while thanking the honourable member for Christchurch South for the flattering terms in which he spoke of me, I may also say this: that this resolution I do not consider as addressed to me personally, but to my colleagues and myselfto the Government as a whole. I do not think it necessary to discuss the question at length, because it is merely a recommendation to the Government to come down with proposals next There is no honourable member but must admit that, if the Government can make satisfactory proposals, they must have a good effect upon the country. I do not altogether agree with the honourable member for Christchurch South as to the extent to which this can be done. Of the loans to which he refers, a large amount consists of loans in excess of which there is a comparatively small margin, and on which, therefore, the rate of interest is exceptionally high. But it would not be safe for the Government to advance money at a low rate of interest unless there was an ample margin. The honourable gentleman, however, is perfectly correct in saying that it is not only a

question of great importance, but a question which engages the attention of a large number of persons in the colony, who look upon it as one of the most important questions that could be dealt with. They look upon it, in fact, as a question which materially concerns those who are engaged in agricultural pursuits. To some extent, I would point out to honourable gentlemen, the matter has been dealt with this session, because in the Life Assurance Bill already passed the Association is permitted to invest a portion of the funds on mortgage of real estate not exceeding half of the value. If the House—as it may well do -passes this resolution, the subject will have the earnest attention of the Government during the recess; and we hope to be able to bring down proposals which, when reviewed by the House, will gain its acceptance. I may say that, by the mail that went out last Saturday, I fulfilled the promise made to the honourable member for Port Chalmers to write Home for full information upon the subject, as regards the way in which it is dealt with by other Governments

Mr. O'CONOR.—I desire to point out to the Government, and particularly to the Colonial Treasurer, that this resolution is worthy of support, not only on its own merits, but also because of its connection with a most important question—the employment of the people on the land, and the improvement of the productiveness of the country. In the hands of the Colonial Treasurer this must become a large and very beneficial scheme in the interests of the colony. It appears to me that one of the great questions of the day in the colony is to increase the productiveness of the country, and at the same time to prevent the great evil that has crushed down our race in the Home-country—namely, the aggrega-tion of people in all the large towns. The matter should also be considered in connection with the Government proposals in regard to the land-tax. When the land-tax is con-sidered, I think allowance should be made for the amount of improvements made on the land, and the number of labourers employed. Is such an exemption were made, it would be the means of greatly increasing the produc-tions of the country. I hope this question will be carefully considered by the Government during the recess.

Mr. SUTTER.—I wish to say a few words with reference to what has fallen from the honourable member for the Buller about the land-tax. One or two members of the House will insist that there was a land-tax proposal before us. No such proposal has been made by the Government, and I shall oppose a land-tax as much as I possibly can. There is no such proposal before the House now, and the Government have not in any way led the House to believe that such is their inteation. I am therefore astonished to hear members bringing this land-tax before the House without the slightest foundation.

Colonel TRIMBLE.—I wish to protest as strongly as I can against the whole doctrine

contained in this resolution. I absolutely protest against it, so that I may, on a future occasion when it comes up, be able to be quite clear upon the subject.

Mr. Macandrew's motion agreed to.

On the motion for going into Committee of Supply presently,

Mr. ROLLESTON said,—I should like to know if the Government intend going on first with the supplementary estimates. Mr. STOUT.—Yes.

Mr. ROLLESTON.—They have only been in the hands of honourable members for a short time—scarcely an hour; and members have not had an opportunity of examining them. A very cursory glance shows that they deal with very cursory glance shows that they deal with very cursory glance shows that they deal with very important subjects, which the House had no reason to expect would be put on the supplementary estimates without notice. The very question which the honourable member himself very properly called attention to really contravenes the decision already arrived at by this House with regard to the South Sea Island trade. It is proposed, as I understand, to take authority under this vote for £1,500 to enter into a contract by which £5,000 a year of the public revenues will be spent upon a trading company in the South Pacific.

Sir J. VOGEL.—The honourable gentleman must have misunderstood me. We already have an island service to Fiji, and it is charged as a mail service; but it cannot be pretended that the mere question of postages is sufficient to justify that service. It is a postal service which has for its object commercial purposes. This amount on the estimates was purely for a steam service, and has nothing whatever to do with the establishment of any trading com-

Mr. ROLLESTON.—As I understand it, it is a subsidy to a steam service under the name of a postal subsidy. The postal subsidy is used for the promotion of a service which will have for its real object the promotion of trade with the South Pacific Islands. It seems to me that the bringing-down of a question of this kind at this late hour, without any notice, and notwithstanding the distinct decision of the House the other day on a Bill brought down for a somewhat similar object, is rather an extraordinary step. Then, these estimates contain other items that are somewhat extraordinary at first sight, and require a good deal of explanation. I should like very much to see the Government postpone these estimates now. At this hour of the night, to begin to force through large sums such as are contemplated does not seem to me to be the right thing. We were told, when the Financial Statement came down, that we began the year with a deficit of £150,000, that we should reduce the taxation by £150,000, and that we should have a surplus of some £60,000.

Sir J. VOGEL.—Less the supplementary

Mr. ROLLESTON.—They come to £43,000. Such a margin, I think, is not satisfactory. I hope the Government will not force the House into Committee of Supply to-night.

Mr. HOLMES.—It is very refreshing to hear the honourable member for Geraldine talking about putting through supplementary estimates for £45,000. If he had any consistency or political decency—I am not aware whether that word would be allowed or not - if the honourable member for Geraldine had any respect for his own character he would not have said one single word about putting these estimates through the House to-night; for I was here in 1882, when his Government brought down public works estimates for £1,800,000, and only gave us notice of them about four or five hours before, and forced them through the House, their own supporters protesting against the indecent haste with which they put them through; and now we have him standing up and protesting against supply being gone on with. I challenge him or any member of his Ministry to deny it. We had Sir John Hall standing up and saying the thing was utterly improper—utterly indecent—passing through hundreds of thousands of pounds without giving honourable members an opportunity of considering what they were doing. Now we have the honourable member for Geraldine talking of dealing with £45,000. I have no doubt some member of the Government will stand up and tell us that most of this money is brought down on account of the disgraceful manner in which that honourable gentleman had been administering his department. One sum of £2,000 is put down on the estimates to make up for the disgraceful laxity with which he administered his department in respect to some settlement at Rotorua.

Mr. O'CONOR.—I am far from joining the . honourable member for Geraldine in his condemnation of the Government for bringing down estimates so quickly. I think the greatest possible credit is due to the Government for doing A number of honourable members are leaving, and, in order to secure a full House and proper consideration for these estimates, it was necessary to bring them down at the earliest possible moment. It is far better that these estimates should be considered now, while there is a large gathering of honourable members, than that they should be brought down later, when the House is limited to very few. I think the Government are to be commended for the promptitude with which they have brought down the supplementary estimates. I hope that they will insist on having these estimates considered to-night, and that they will resist any pressure against the adoption of that course.

Mr. HOBBS.—I wish to know whether there is any intention of departing from the present arrangement for steamers calling regularly at the Bay of Islands to coal and to receive cargoes of beef and sheep. I am sorry to hear the Treasurer's remarks about the South Sea. Islands, because I hold it to be of the utmost importance that we should encourage this trade, which I believe is at present in its infancy. I hope there will be no misunderstanding about allowing the steamers to continue to call regularly at the Bay of Islands.

Mr. STOUT.—I would suggest that it would be more convenient to discuss the several items in Committee, when, I have no doubt, the desired information will be given respecting them

Mr. BRYCE.—Does the honourable gentleman propose to proceed next with the public works estimates?

Mr. STOUT.—Yes.

Mr. BRYCE.—I do not think it is right to do so, and I will say why. When the Public Works Statement was made it was felt to be · a very interesting and important Statement, and there seemed to be some intention on the part of some honourable members to take a discussion upon it immediately; but I, for one, and the honourable member for Auckland East for another, suggested that it would be more convenient to take another opportunity of discussing that very important Statement; and the Minister for Public Works heartly acquiesced, as well as the other members on the Government benches, and they promised, distinctly and absolutely, that a fitting opportunity should be afforded for discussing that Statement.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON .- I would mention, in explanation, that, when it was suggested this evening that we should go into the public works estimates, the leader of the Opposition suggested that it would be a fitting opportunity to raise the discussion referred to when the resolutions from Committee of Supply are re-

ported to-morrow.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I quite agree with the honourable member for Geraldine that the Government should not rush business through the House; but the House is willing to go on with these estimates to-night, and we cannot hope to get as full a House for the remainder of the session. My colleagues and myself would be quite willing to sit here till Christmas; but that does not meet the views of honourable members, who desire to get away on Friday or Saturday. Therefore it is necessary that the estimates should be considered to-night.

Motion agreed to, and the House went into Committee of Supply.

# IN COMMITTEE. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES. CLASS I.—LEGISLATIVE.

Legislative Department, £1,049. Mr. W. J. STEWARD said Mr. Didsbury, the Government Printer, had made an application to the Reporting and Printing Committee on behalf of the *Hansard* compositors, and the Committee had recommended the voting of £81 on that account. During the six weeks between the two sessions the compositors could only be employed about two days a week, and some of them were only able to earn a few shillings each; the average per man, for the whole staff, being at most £1. The Committee had recommended that £81 should be distributed amongst these men. The House had referred the Committee's report to the favourable consideration of the Government, but the amount had not been put on these estimates. He hoped the Treasurer would even yet find

some means of carrying out the recommendation of the Committee.

Sir J. VOGEL said the Legislative estimates were framed by the two Speakers, and the Government merely took their estimates and submitted them. Ministers were not even bound to support them, but it would be very discourteous of any Government not to afford the House an opportunity of passing the votes which the Speakers recommended. As to the point that there was no provision for paying the Chairman of the Waste Lands Committee, he supposed it had not been recommended, otherwise it would have appeared on the estimates. A special resolution in favour of paying the Chairman of the Gold Fields Committee had been passed by that Committee; it had been submitted to the Government by the Speaker; and consequently the amount had been placed on the estimates. He might say this: that, if there was any Committee Chairmanship to which; pecial payment should attach — beyond the Petitions Committee, the duties of which were very arduous -it should be that of the Gold Fields Committee, on account of the constant and heavy duties of that Committee. He had no doubt the compositors were entitled to some consideration; but no recommendation on their behalf had reached the Government. recommendation came from the Government Printer or from the Printing Committee, he had no doubt the Government would take the responsibility of setting the sum down.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD said the recommendation came from the Government Printer, and had been supported by the Committee, whose report on the subject had, on his motion, been referred by the House to the favourable con-

sideration of the Government.

Sir J. VOGEL said, to the best of his belief the matter had not come before the Govern-He was glad to take this opportunity of expressing his own warm acknowledgments, and he believed he might do so on behalf of the House, to the Hansard reporters for the admirable manner in which they reported the debates; also to the Printing Office for the admirable manner in which it met the enormous pressure of the session in the way of printing documents. He could speak with some knowledge of the subject, because he had had documents printed which it was most important should be kept entirely secret and confidential for many days together, and the Government Printing Office was equal to the task-which was not an easy one, considering the large num-ber of the men employed. As to the reports coming back here after the lapse of some years it had struck him that the improvement in the Hansard reports was most remarkable, and that, considering the enormously heavy duties of the reporters, their work was beyond all praise.

Mr. CONOLLY would point out that, though £120 was set down for the Chairman of Committees of the Council, they were doing that gentleman but scant justice, for, whereas in former years he had been paid £190 more than ordinary members of the Council, this year,

even with this proposed vote, he would only receive exactly the same amount as ordinary members draw as honorarium. He regretted, therefore, that a larger sum was not proposed. He would like some explanation as to why, as these additions were to be proposed, they were not sent to the Government in time to be discussed when the ordinary estimates were before the House on the previous day. Here were additions to the salaries of a number of officers the Clerk, the Clerk-Assistant, the Librarian and his assistant, &c.-whose salaries they had voted the previous day. Why were not the salaries and the additions brought on together? He should like to know why, in these times, it was proposed to increase these expenses.

Supply.

Sir J. VOGEL said the amounts had only been proposed quite recently—weeks since the ordinary estimates were printed. He agreed that the £120 now put down for the Chairman of Committees of the Council would only give that gentleman the same amount for the year as the double honorarium taken by other mem-

bers of the Council.

Mr. O'CONOR said, as Hansard had been referred to, he would express a wish that the Government would see that the resolutions he had had the honour of proposing early in the session were carried out in their integrity. ready the subscriptions to Hansard had increased very largely—from one or two hundred to over one thousand four hundred. He hoped the Government would see to it that the cost price was strictly adhered to, and that every facility was given during the recess to take orders and to carry out the principle initiated, so that next session they might be enabled to make Hansard more accessible and of still more advantage to the public. He thought it would be some satisfaction to know that already the alteration had been received in the warmest possible manner by the public. He hoped facilities to get Hansard would be extended, and that the spirit of the resolutions passed would be fully observed.

Mr. HATCH moved, That the item, "Legislative Council—Extra clerical assistance (additional), £50," be struck out. He presumed that was the amount struck out in the ordinary estimates, and it seemed strange that an item

once refused should be put on again just after.

Mr. HOLMES asked for an explanation of the item, "Legislative Council—Shorthand reporter (6 months), £75."

Sir J. VOGEL said this was a new officer ap-

pointed by the Speaker.

Mr. HÖLMES asked how they were going to control the expenditure of public money if the Council could put on amounts without

consulting the Government.

Sir J. VOGEL said these questions were all questions of degree. If the Council found they could not overtake their business without a shorthand reporter, and if the Council asked the Speaker to appoint such an officer, it would be placing the Council in a very humiliating position if they were not allowed to engage the services of a shorthand reporter.

Mr. HOLMES said there were high degrees

and low degrees, and this was a low degree. He moved, That the item be struck out.

Sir J. VOGEL said the Speaker of the Council had appointed the officer who had given his Would the honourable gentleman have the Speaker pay the amount himself, or should they get up a contribution in this House to do it?

Mr. HOLMES did not care how it was done, so that the money of the country was not taken for it. Why the Council should be allowed to appoint an additional reporter was past his comprehension. The House must not lose the control of the public purse, and, if the Treasurer wished to give up the control to the Council, he would have to get other supporters than himself (Mr. Holmes). He represented the taxpayers, and would not submit to this House losing control of the public purse.

Sir J. VOGEL did not intend to give up the control of the purse, but it would scarcely pay the House to have to specially consider the appointment of a reporter to the Legislative Council, and it was much better that it should come on in the regular course as it did now. Of course he would not consent to the Speaker of either House incurring any large expenditure without consulting the Government, and he had no doubt the Colonial Secretary, who was in the Legislative Council, had been consulted as to the appointment of this reporter. He would therefore accept the responsibility for this item on behalf of the Government.

Mr. HOLMES must protest against the doctrine that the Speaker of the Upper House could appoint any number of sinecure officers. and then that the Colonial Treasurer should take the responsibility on himself. not this reporter's salary appear on the main estimates, if he had been employed from the

beginning of the session? Sir J. VOGEL said the honourable member forgot the circumstances of the beginning of the session, when work had to be done in respect to which the less shorthand reporting the better. Then the Government came into office, and they had to prepare their estimates in a couple of weeks, at which time no pressure of work could have fallen on the Upper House. It was since that time that it had been found necessary to employ an additional shorthand reporter. Of course it would be wrong for the Speaker of the Upper House to have the ear of the Government in making sinecure appointments; but this was a different thing altogether.

Mr. HOLMES said it had been the constant complaint of the members of the other House that they had not had sufficient work to do: how, then, could pressure of work be advanced as an argument for the appointment of

this reporter?

Mr. O'CONOR said it was quite proper to assert the privileges of the House of Representatives in regard to the custody of the public purse; but would the honourable member contend that all the work of the Council was to be stopped until the House had authorized the appointment of an officer of this kind? The discussion which was now taking place showed that the House had control over the expenditure. As the Speaker of the Legislative Counoil had incurred this expenditure at his own risk, and as the item was liable to be struck out, it was evident that the Lower House had the control; but it would be incumbering their position very much if they were to discuss every little item of expenditure on the part of the other House.

Mr. HOLMES said that if the Premier would say that the Speaker of the Upper House had consulted him as to this amount he would be satisfied; but, if not, he must protest against a gentleman who was responsible to no one

making these appointments.
Sir J. VOGEL said the honourable member had already been told that the Government accepted the responsibility for this item. This was not a Hansard reporter, as the honourable member seemed to imagine, but a reporter for the Select Committees of the Legislative Council; and there was no reason to suppose that the work of the other House was lighter in that

respect than it had always been.

Mr. CONOLLY must protest against these unwarrantable charges being made against a gentleman holding the high and honourable position of Speaker of the Legislative Council. The honourable member for Christchurch South had spoken of this as an appointment to a sinecure, and also talked about favouritism, and about the item not being sent down till a very late date. Before such charges were made against a gentleman who could not defend himself, the honourable gentleman should have taken the trouble to inquire whether there was any ground whatever for making them. He believed it would be found that this shorthand writer was absolutely required, in the opinion of the Speaker of the Legislative Council, and of the Chairman of Committees of that Council, to assist in reporting the proceedings of Select Committees

Mr. HOLMES had made no charges against anybody, and had not attributed any motives

whatever.

Mr. STOUT explained that the various items, with the exception of "Chairman of Committees, £120," had been recommended by the Speakers

Mr. O'CONOR understood that the proposed additions were in consequence of two sessions

having been held this year. Item, "Shorthand reporter (6 months), £75,"

agreed to.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the item, 'Extra clerical assistance (additional), £50,' be struck out."

#### Avea SK

AIES, UU.	
Dodson	Levestam
Duncan	Locke
Fraser	Macandrew
Gillies	McKenzie, J.
Hatch	McMillan
Hobbs	Richardson, G.
Joyce	Prolleston
Lake	Ross
	Dodson Duncan Fraser Gillies Hatch Hobbs Joyce

Mr. O'Conor

Russell Thompson, T. Wilson. Seddon Trimble Tellers.Shephard Turnbull Holmes Steward, W. J. White, W. O'Conor.

Supply.

Nors., 16.

Beetham Conolly Menteath Hirst, H. Peacock Hursthouse Johnston SmithThomson, J. W. Pearson. Lance

Mackenzie, M. Vogel Walker: Richardson, E. Tellers. Newman

Majority for, 19.

Item struck out.

Mr. HATCH moved, That the item; "Extramessengers (additional), £50," be struck out. The Committee divided.

AYES, 17.

Allwright Fraser Gillies Barron Bevan Lake McKenzie, J. Bryce McMillan Cowan O'Conor Duncan

Richardson, G. Thompson, T. Trimble. Tellers. Hatch Holmes.

NoEs, 33.

Beetham. Locke B.-Bradshaw. Mackenzie, M. Bruce Menteath Conolly Moat Newman Dodson Hirst, H. Peacock Hobbs Pearson Hursthouse Richardson, E. Wilson. Johnston Ross Joyce Russell Lance Shephard Levestam

Shrimski Steward, W. J. Thomson, J. W. Tole Turnbull Vogel. Walker Tellers. Cadman Smith.

Majority against, 16.

Item retained.

Mr. SEDDON moved, That the item, "Clerk of the House (additional), £100," be struck out.

Mr. GILLIES said he thought the House should be advised by the Government in refer-

ence to these matters.

Sir J. VOGEL said it appeared to the Government that extra amounts asked for on account of the second session should be voted as being fair and reasonable, but with regard to additions to salaries the House was as well able to judge as the Government. So far as he was aware, members of the Government would vote for the items of £100 each for the Clerk of the House and Clerk-Assistant, but they would in no way dictate to the House concerning them.

Mr. SEDDON thought that the Treasurer should have told the House that the gentleman in question received at the present time £700 a year for three months' work. The session sometimes lasted four or five months, and, if the last short session was added to the present one, it would be found to be only a short session. The House was placed in a false position by having to strike out these items; the Government should have taken the responsibility, or not have brought them on at all.

Sir J. VOGEL said the three amounts for the Clerk of the House, the Clerk-Assistant, and the Head Messenger, were recommended as permanent additions to the salaries of those officials; whilst the others, to the Librarian, the Assistant-Librarian, reporters, and for occasional assistance, were in the nature of gratuities. The item to the night-watchman, whose duties were very arduous, was also an increase of salary.

Item, "Clerk of the House (additional), £100,"

struck out.

Clerk-Assistant (additional), £100.

Mr. HATCH proposed, That this item be struck out.

Item struck out.

Chairman of Gold Fields and Mines Com-

mittee, £100.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE would like to know why the Chairman of this Committee should be voted £100, when the Chairman of the Waste Lands Committee, whose duties were more onerous, received no remuneration. These distinctions were, he thought, invidious.

Mr. O'CONOR said the Chairman of the Mines Committee did a great deal of work, to do which involved a considerable amount of self-sacrifice. The Chairman of the Committee brought a large amount of technical knowledge to bear on the subject, and had a great deal to do. He thought that the Chairman of the Waste Lands Committee also had a just

claim for consideration.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE thought that, if the Chairman was to be paid because he devoted his time to the business, then all the Chairmen of Committees and the members of Committees should be paid. He moved, That the item be

struck out.

Sir J. VOGEL said the Committee had passed a resolution recommending the payment; that resolution was passed on to the Speaker, and, through the Speaker, to the Government, and it was therefore placed on the Knowing as he did the enormous mass of business that went before the Committee, he might say that but for its merciful interposition a very large amount of additional work would be thrown on the House. The members of the Committee, having watched the arduous duties of the Chairman, had recommended the payment of the item now before the House, and he should cordially support it, believing the money to be well earned.

Mr. O'CONOR said that the work of the Committee rapidly and almost daily increased, and the Chairman's labours were made more onerous by the fact that the same clerk was

not always in attendance.

Mr. SEDDON said that, had it not been for the work of the Chairman, the Committee

would have had to sit every day.

Mr. PEACOCK would support the motion of the honourable member for Motueka. The Chairman of the Waste Lands Committee had much more difficult duties to perform, or, at all events, much more of his time was taken up; and he did not see why the Chairman of this Committee should get £100, while nothing

was voted for the Chairman of the Waste Lands Committee.

Mr. GILLIES intended to support the honourable member for Motueka, and, as they were trying to save expenditure in every direc-tion, he did not see why they should not begin with themselves. He thought that the office of Chairman of any of these Committees should be looked upon as an honour, and not have pay attached to it.

Mr. BEVAN hoped the House would not agree to this proposed reduction. The honourable member for Motueka's protest against this was a deathbed repentance. He had seen that honourable member at the first meeting he attended, but since then he had been con-spicuous by his absence, and therefore was not

a judge of the merits of the question.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE said that the honourable member was not stating the fact when he stated that he (Mr. Hursthouse) was a member of the Committee and was conspicuous by his absence. He had never been a member of the Committee.

The Committee divided. -

#### AYES, 19.

Thompson, T. Allwright Lake Macarthur Bruce Trimble Bryce McMillan Wilson. Conolly Peacock Gillies Richardson, G. Tellers. Hobbs Rolleston Hursthouse Johnston Russell Newman. .

#### Nozs, 28.

BeethamJoyce . Shephard B.-Bradshaw Lance Smith Cadman Larnach Stout Cowan Locke Tole Dodson Mackenzie, M. Turnbull Duncan Menteath Vogel. Fraser Pearson Harper Richardson, E. Tellers. Bevan Hatch Ross Hirst, H. Seddon O'Conor.

# PAIRS.

For. Against. Walker Atkinson Buchanan. McKenzie, J. Majority against, 9.

Mr. Hursthouse's amendment negatived.

Mr. HOBBS moved, That the amount be reduced by £50, so that £50 of the amount could be given to the Chairman of the Waste Lands Committee.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. LAKE moved, That the item, "Librarian (additional), £25," be struck out; and also "Assistant Librarian (additional), £20." These increases were refused by the Library Com-

Mr. JOYCE hoped the Committee would allow these items to remain. Every honourable member knew that the Librarian was a highlyaccomplished scholar, a man of high attainments, and his salary was not at all adequate to the position he held. Honourable members

were under deep obligations to these officers, whose work did not end with the session. In this matter the Library Committee were no better judges than members of the House as a body

The Committee divided.

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Conolly	Rolleston	Trimble
Dodson	$\mathbf{Russell}$	Turnbull.
Gillies	Shephard	Tellers.
Hatch	Steward, W. J	. Holmes
Hobbs	Thompson, T.	
Lence		

NoEs, 80.

Beetham	Locke	Seddon
Bevan	Mackenzie, M.	Smith
BBradshaw	McKenzie, J.	Stout
Cadman	Menteath	Tole
Cowan	Moss	Vogel
Duncan	Newman	Walker
Fraser	Peacock	Wilson.
Harper	Pyke	Tellers.
Hirst, H.	Richardson, E.	Joyce
Johnston	Richardson, G.	Macarthur.
Larnach	,	

Majority against, 15.

Amendment negatived.

Librarian (additional), £25, agreed to. Assistant-Librarian (additional), £20, agreed

Second Assistant in Library (additional), £20, agreed to.

Custodian (additional), £50.

Mr. HOLMES protested against this in-ease. The Custodian already received £250 per annum, and a house worth another £50, amounting in all to £300. The gentleman who was Librarian was supposed to be a man of considerable education and acquirements, and he received only £300. The person who occupied the position of caretaker would in England receive about from £70 to £100 a year. Here he received £250 a year and £50 for a house. He trusted the proposed increase would be struck out, and begged to move an amendment to that effect.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD understood that gas

and coal were also supplied.

Mr. SEDDON could assure the Committee that the institution which the Custodian managed was a paying one, and it was managed most economically. He could also assure the honourable member for Christchurch South that a man of the Custodian's capabilities was worth £500 a year in London. He (Mr. Seddon) could not see why exception should be taken to this item.

The Committee divided.

	AYES, ZI.	
Bruce	Macarthur '	Thompson, T
Duncan	Rolleston	Tole
Fraser	Ross	Trimble
Fulton	Russell	Walker
Gillies	Shephard	Tellers.
Harper	Steward, W.	J. Hatch
Holmes	Stout	Pearson.
T - 1	· · ·	

Mr. Jouce

Noes, 23. Joyce

Beetham Newman Bevan Lance Richardson, E. B.-Bradshaw Larnach Smith Levestam Conolly Vogel Mackenzie, M. Wilson. Cowan Tellers.

Dodson McKenzie, J. Hirst Menteath Hobbs Johnston Seddon. Moss

Majority against, 2.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. HOLMES moved, That the item be reduced by £25. Only £25 additional was voted for the Librarian, and no larger sum should be voted for the Custodian.

The Committee divided.

# AYES, 29.

Bruce	Mackenzie, M.	Shephard
Duncan	McKenzie, J.	Stewart, W. D
Fraser	McMillan	Stout
Fulton	Menteath	Thompson, T.
Gillies	O'Conor	Tole
Harper	Peacock	Trimble
Hirst, H.	Pearson	Walker.
Lake	Rolleston	Tellers.
Levestam	Ross ·	Hatch
Macarthur	Russell	Holmes.
I		

Noes, 19.

Beetham	Joyce	Seddon
Bevan.	Lance	Vogel
BBradshaw	Larnach	Wilson.
Conolly	Locke	
Cowan	Newman	Tellers.
Dodson	Pyke	Hobbs
Johnston	Richardson, E.	Мовв.
	Majority for, 10	D.

Item reduced. Vote, as reduced to £744, agreed to.

CLASS II .- COLONIAL SECRETARY. Electoral Department, £125, agreed to. Stock Branch, £500.

Mr. DODSON moved, That the item be struck out. This sum was proposed by the Waste Lands Committee to be given to Captain Raymond in recognition of his services connected with phosphorized oats as a rabbit-poison. He believed that, if the Committee had had all the information before it, they would have voted against it. To his mind, Captain Raymond had no claim whatever on this account.

Sir J. VOGEL said this was recommended by the Committee, but the Government did not

feel bound to support it.

Mr. J. McKENZIE said it would be an injustice to throw out this item. Captain Raymond was the first to bring phosphorized oats into use as a poison, although it might have been known to scientific men before. Hundreds of thousands of acres which were profitably occupied by sheep would have been per-fectly useless but for this discovery. It was people in the country who had seen the benefits conferred by it who felt that some reward ought to be given for the discovery, and he maintained that the Government ought to

have offered a much larger reward for it. All the evidence which had been taken by the Committee showed that this phosphorized oats was the best remedy that had yet been discovered for the extinction of this pest, and discoverers of such things ought to be rewarded so as to encourage others.

Mr. COWAN hoped the Committee would retain the item. Any man who had known the state of the country for the last seven or eight years must feel that such a cheap way of applying phosphorus to oats as this gentleman had discovered should be rewarded in the highest

Mr. FULTON, as Chairman of the Waste Lands Committee, which had inquired into the matter, thought it only fair to Captain Raymond to say that he did not claim to be the discoverer of phosphorized oats, but he did claim to having brought it into cheap use. Those who were acquainted with the parts of the country where the rabbit nuisance existed to an enormous extent all acknowledged that some recognition should be given to Captain Raymond for his discovery.

Mr. DODSON said that Captain Raymond acknowledged that he first began with an American recipe, and then he went on making experiments as any other person might have done. He believed that this remedy had already been used in Victoria before Captain Raymond brought it into use in New Zealand.

Mr. GILLIES could bear testimony to the fact that this had been a most valuable discovery, and he ventured to say this gentleman had done more for the good of New Zealand than any other person that he knew.

Mr. SMITH might say that evidence had been adduced before the Select Committee which inquired into the subject that this gentleman had done great good in showing how to clear the waste lands of the Crown of the rabbit pest, and that he was certainly entitled to the reward.

The Committee divided.

	AYES, 24.	
Beetham ·	Hobbs	Rolleston
Bruce	Johnston	Smith
Cadman	Joyce	Steward, W
Cowan	McKenzie, J.	Stout
Fraser	Peacock	Vogel.
Fulton.	Pearson	Tellers.
Gillies	Richardson, E	. Duncan
Hatch	Richardson, G	. Shrimski.
Hiret H		

. J.

	Noes, 23.	
Allwright	Macarthur	Thompson, T.
Bevan	Mackenzie, M.	
Conolly	McMillan	Walker
Harper	Menteath	White, W.
Holmes	Ross	Wilson.
Hursthouse	Russell	Tellers.
Lake	Seddon	Dodson

Lance Shephard Majority for, 1.

Vote, £500, retained.

Miscellaneous, £2,794. Mr. HOLMES asked for an explanation with | should have made this report himself.

O'Conor.

regard to the item of £894 paid by the Agent-General to Sir Edward Reed for a report in connection with the direct steam service. He thought the duty of the Agent-General was to make the report himself, and that he was not authorized to employ a special person at such an extravagant amount as this.

Sir J. VÖGEL was not in a position to judge of the expediency of the payment which had been made on the responsibility of the Agent-General. If the amount had been on the books of the colony it would have appeared in the unauthorized expenditure. He would read a letter from the Agent-General, which would best explain the matter. (Letter read.) It was really more a question for the members of the late Government to answer, and it would be more competent for them to express an opinion -if an opinion was necessary—beyond the explanation afforded in that letter. At any rate, the money had been paid, and he did not see any other course but to vote it.

Mr. HOLMES wished to know if the Committee were to understand that, if officers of the Government incurred expense, the Government would afterwards tell the House that there was no other course but to vote the money. He moved, That the item be struck out.

Mr. ROLLESTON wished to have some explanation as to the meaning of the item, "Grant in aid of fire brigades' annual demonstration, £250."

Mr. STOUT said that this amount was to pay the passages of members of fire brigades to attend public competitions, and to give money prizes. The colony spent a good deal of money on rifle-shooting, and he considered that fire brigades were of as much service to the colony as the Volunteers.

Mr. ROLLESTON wished to know what was the character of the demonstration.

Mr. STOUT said it was an annual competition, and members of fire brigades in Victoria

came and took part in this competition.

Mr. PEARSON wished to have some information with regard to the item, "Industrial Exhibition, £1,000."

Sir J. VOGEL had already explained, in the Financial Statement, that it was proposed to hold an Industrial Exhibition next year in Wellington, about the time of the session, and this amount was to go towards the payment of the expenses. It was sufficient up to March next; but more might be required. It was believed that some part of the expenditure might be recouped. He thought honourable members generally approved of the proposal.

Mr. PEACOCK thought they should pass the item for the report on the direct steam service, as he thought it was a most valuable report.

Mr. ROLLESTON considered the report one of very great value, not only for the present but for the future. No doubt the Agent-General had taken a responsibility upon himself with regard to it, but he thought the value of the

report justified the expenditure.

Mr. HOLMES thought the Agent-General

Amendment negatived. Vote, £2,794, agreed to.

CLASS III .- COLONIAL TREASURER. Miscellaneous, £1,045, agreed to.

CLASS IV .- MINISTER OF JUSTICE.

Bankruptcy, £1,085. Mr. G. F. RICHARDSON moved, That the item, "Clerk, Auckland (additional), £30," be struck out.

Amendment negatived. Vote, £1,085, agreed to.

CLASS IV.—MINISTER OF JUSTICE. District, Resident Magistrates', and Wardens' Courts, £320, agreed to. Miscellaneous, £84, agreed to.

CLASS V .- POSTMASTER-GENERAL AND COM-MISSIONER OF TELEGRAPHS.

Chief offices and sub-offices, £1,080, agreed

Conveyance of mails by sea, £2,400. Mr. ROLLESTON moved, That the item, "New Zealand and Pacific Islands, £1,500," be omitted. It would seem that the House was asked to assist a commercial enterprise.

Sir J. VOGEL said there were various places at which the steamers would call, and this service would lead to commercial relations be-tween New Zealand and the islands. If they desired to connect New Zealand permanently with the groups of Samoa and Tonga they must set about increasing their commercial re-

Mr. CONOLLY thought the arguments of the Colonial Treasurer showed that the House ought not to pass this vote. The honourable gentleman said he believed there was some commercial enterprise left in the country. So did he (Mr. Conolly); but, if they gave a monopoly to one particular company, that would result in crushing enterprise. He instanced the case of the direct steam service, for which the House had been asked to vote a subsidy of £40,000. It refused to grant that sum, reducing the amount to £20,000. It was said that they would never get a steam service under those conditions; but within two years they had a steam service much better than they expected to get, and that without any subsidy at all.

Mr. HOLMES said the cost of the service to America was really only about £6,000 a year, and yet it was proposed to incur a cost of \$5,000 a year to run a mail to the islands of Tahiti and Tonga. The whole of the trade between New Zealand and these places, even supposing we got the whole of it, which was not likely, seeing that we had to compete with the richer merchants of Australia, would not yield a profit exceeding £5,000 a year. To suppose that we should get great advantage from this mail service was purely chimerical.

Mr. PEACOCK could see a considerable distinction between this vote and what was asked for in the Bill referred to by the honourable member for Geraldine. It was, in his opinion,

a wise thing to open up communication between New Žealand and these islands, and he could not but approve of the proposed arrangement, especially seeing that it could be terminated at six months' notice.

Mr. GILLIES would give this proposal his cordial support, though he thought the amount rather large. He should like to know if Fiji rather large. and New Caledonia should not be included.

Mr. HOBBS expressed a hope that this service would not interfere with steamers which at present coaled and took in cargoes of cattle for the islands at the Bay of Islands.

Sir J. VOGEL said that there was no reason for thinking that there would be interference with steamers already in the trade. Tenders would be invited for the performance of the service, and, if the steamers trading from the Bay of Islands were suitable, they would have an equal chance with the others. As to the opposition to the vote, he would merely remark that it was a question as to the desirability of increasing the trade of New Zealand. If these islands were as valuable as they were supposed to be by many nations, was it wise for New Zealand to know nothing of them? That was really the question. A trade between New South Wales and the Fijis had been established principally by the agency of a steam service, and he did not see why a similar result should not follow in this instance. He was sure the country generally would support the proposal.

The Committee divided on Mr. Rolleston's amendment.

AYES, 23. Hursthouse Allwright Rosa Beetham Johnston Russell Bevan Lake Trimble White, W. Bruce Levestam Duncan Macarthur Wilson. Hatch McMillan Tellers. Hirst, H. Richardson, G. Conolly Fulton. Holmes Rolleston

> Nozs, 25. O'Conor

Cadman Dodson Peacock Gillies Pearson Hobbs Pyke Richardson, E. Walker. Joyce Lance Seddon Larnach Shephard McKenzie, J.

**S**mith

Stout Thomson, T. Tole Vogel

Fraser Steward, W. J. Moat.

Pair.

For. Moss.

Newman

Against. Barron.

Majority against, 2.

Item retained. Vote, £2,400, agreed to.

CLASS VI.—COMMISSIONER OF TRADE AND CUSTOMS.

Marine and Harbours, £268, agreed to. Miscellaneous, £5,939. Mr. PEARSON wished for an explanation of

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the amount "S.s. 'Hinemoa' (additional),

Mr. STOUT replied that the additional sum was found necessary to keep the "Hinemoa" in commission.

Vote, £5,939, agreed to.

CLASS VII.—COMMISSIONER OF STAMPS. Miscellaneous, £5, agreed to.

CLASS VIII.-MINISTER OF EDUCATION. Head Office, £40, agreed to.

Public schools, £11,640.

Mr. PEARSON wished to know the meaning of the item, "Westland District, £2,350."

Mr. STOUT was sorry to say it was money owing by the late Westland Education Board.

Mr. PEARSON inquired whether liabilities of other districts would be taken over if they man into debt

Mr. STOUT did not see how the case could be met in any other way. If the grant to the district were reduced, it would mean that the small schools would be shut up.

Mr. HOLMES thought the bank should be left to hold the members of the Board to which the money had been advanced personally liable.

Mr. HOBBS suggested that the Government should consider the possibility of prosecuting the late Chairman of the Board.

Mr. GILLIES considered that the effect of taking over these liabilities would be demoralizing to all the Education Boards.

Dr. NEWMAN inquired whether the Government would take over the liabilities of other Boards if they got into debt in the same

Mr. STOUT replied that the Board had been abolished in 1882. That, he thought, should not have been done, but the Board should have been left to get out of its difficulties without the interference of the Government. The Board having been abolished, there was no other way out of the difficulty.

Vote, £11,640, agreed to. Higher education, £700.

Mr. J. McKENZIE would like the assurance of the Minister, before the vote was passed, that the Waitaki High School should be made available for the children of tradesmen and merchants in the Town of Oamaru. At present the school was only a class school.

Mr. STOUT said this was the only high school that had not got a penny of aid in starting. He only proposed the grant for one year, so as to enable it to undertake the work of a district

high school. Mr. HOLMES said a promise of reduction had been made, but the cost of education had not been reduced.

Mr. STOUT said the honourable gentleman's statement was wrong. This vote last year was 24,150, and this year it was £2,600.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the item be retained."

AYES, 32.

Beetham Cadman Gillies Bevan Fraser Hamlin B.-Bradshaw Fulton Hatch

Hobbs	Newman	Stout
Joyce .	O'Conor	Thompson, T.
Lake	Peacock	Tole
Lance	Richardson, E.	Trimble-
Larnach	Rolleston	Walker.
Levestam	Ross	Tellers.
Mackenzie, M.	Seddon	McKenzie, J.
Moat	Shephard	Shrimski.
	NoEs, 13.	
Allwright	Holmes	White, W.
Bruce	Hursthouse	
Conolly	Macarthur	Tellers.

Duncan McMillan Hirst, H. Russell

Pearson Wilson.

Majority for, 19.

Item retained.

CLASS IX.—MINISTER OF NATIVE AFFAIRS. Miscellaneous, £300, agreed to.

CLASS X.—MINISTER OF MINES. Miscellaneous, £2,500, agreed to.

CLASS XI.—MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS. Working railways, £2,645, agreed to. Government domains—Auckland (additional), £125, agreed to.

Public buildings, £7,008, agreed to. Miscellaneous, £1,000, ageed to.

CLASS XII.—MINISTER OF DEFENCE. Militia and Volunteers, £1,504, agreed to. Stores and magazines, £187, agreed to. Miscellaneous, £348, agreed to.

CLASS XIII.—MINISTER OF LANDS AND MINES. Crown Lands Department, £245, agreed to. Miscellaneous, £2,267, agreed to. Survey Department, £3,000, agreed to.

GOVERNMENT INSURANCE DEPARTMENT. Vote, £28,190, agreed to.

PUBLIC WORKS FUND. CLASS I .- IMMIGRATION. Matron (additional), £25, agreed to.

CLASS II.—PUBLIC WORKS, DEPARTMENTAL. Vote, £150, agreed to.

CLASS III.—MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS. New works—Construction and land, £10,000. Mr. SHRIMSKI moved, That the vote be struck out.

Progress was reported.

The House adjourned at five minutes past four o'clock a.m.

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, 6th November, 1884.

First Readings—Second Reading—Third Reading— Native Land Alienation Restriction Bill — West Coast Settlement Reserves Bill — Native Land Alienation Restriction Bill—Westland Education District Subdivision Bill — Trade with India— Native Land Alienation Restriction Bill — Wanganui Harbour Board Empowering Bill.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

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FIRST READINGS.

Special Powers and Contracts Bill, Railways Authorization Bill.

SECOND READING.
Special Powers and Contracts Bill.

THIRD READING.

Land Bill.

NATIVE LAND ALIENATION RESTRICTION BILL.

On the motion of the Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCK-LEY, it was resolved, That Wahanui be heard at the bar of the Council.

WEST COAST SETTLEMENT RESERVES BILL.

On the motion, That this Bill be committed, The Hon. Captain FRASER said this was about the worst Bill he had seen, and he could not understand how it had been brought before Parliament at all. It was proposed to deal with Native lands in a way in which they would not attempt to deal with the lands of Europeans. The person who drafted this Bill was the person who would have to administer it. He objected strongly to the extension of the leases to thirty years. When he had spoken to the Premier about this Bill, the Premier said he had no objection to the leases being made for twenty-one years, which was the ordinary period of leases in the colony. He (Captain Fraser) trusted that when the Bill got into Committee they would alter the word "thirty" to "twenty-one." He believed the Bill had not been submitted to the Cabinet, and in Committee he would try to get it altered.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND thought that the Hon. Captain Fraser had spoken without authority. There was no evidence whatever as to who had drafted the Bill, or who was going to administer it. It was in the power of the Government to appoint any one; and, if the West Coast Trustee were appointed, he would be supported and held in hand by several high officers of the Government—the Public Trustee and the Colonial Treasurer among the rest. The reason why the period of thirty years had been fixed for leases by the Committee instead of twenty-one was, that the property affected was chiefly forest land, and, unless a longer term was given than for open lands that were ready for cultivation, favourable terms could not be commanded.

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL thought that the objection raised by the Hon. Captain Fraser had been completely answered by the Hon. Mr. J. C. Richmond. It was extremely inconvenient to have to lease forest lands for a short period.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN said there was no doubt the Bill granted terrible powers to cartain people; but it was a case in which he believed people would have to be trusted with powers, and, if they abused them, then their action would call for the repeal of the Bill. Very large powers had been given to Sir William Fox, who had exercised them with credit to himself and with good results to the country. It was to be hoped that similar results would follow here.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE would like tohear some reason to show that these extensive powers were absolutely necessary. In this case the Hon. Mr. McLean overlooked the fact that the evil would be done before the remedy could be applied, and that it was of no use withdrawing the powers after they had been exercised. He should have preferred to see the Bill-The comparison that had been held over. made of the proposed powers with those given to Sir William Fox was not at all to the point. Sir William Fox had to undertake certain work that required dictatorial powers; but these lands had all been taken previously, and there was no difficulty whatever in dealing with them. He could not see why they should not be dealt with in accordance with wiser, broader, and more suitable provisions than were contained in this Bill.

Motion agreed to.

#### IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 7.—Agricultural leases may be granted for thirty years.

The Hon. Captain FRASER moved, That the word "thirty" be erased, and "twenty-one" inserted.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the word 'thirty' stand part of the clause."

AYES, 21.

Acland Henderson Pollen Bonar Johnson, G. R. Reeves Brandon Johnston, J. Reynolds Richmond, J. C. Buckley, G. Lahmann Buckley, P. A. Mantell Waterhouse Dignan Peacock Wigley Peter Williamson. Grace

Noes, 8.

Barnicoat Hart Scotland
Chamberlin Kohere Wilson.
Fraser Pharazyn

Majority for, 13.

Amendment negatived.

Clause 18.—Powers enlarged for determining as to succession to deceased Natives, &c.
The Hon. Dr. POLLEN moved, That the

clause be erased.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

AYES, 16. Chamberlin Peter Acland Reeves Barnicoat Dignan Reynolds Bonar Lahmann Mantell Richmond, J.C. Brandon Buckley, G. Peacock Wigley. Buckley, P. A.

Noes, 13.

Fraser Kohere Scotland McLean Waterhouse Grace Hart Pharazyn Williamson Johnson, G. R. Pollen Wilson.Johnston, J.

Majority for, 3.

Clause retained

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN moved, That the following new clause be inserted :-

"This Act shall remain in force until the last day of the session of Parliament of one thouand eight hundred and eighty-seven, and no longer."

AYES. 4.

Fraser McLean Williamson Wilson.

Noes, 17.

Acland Henderson Peter Johnson, G. R. Reeves Barnicoat Bonar Kohere Reynolds Buckley, G. Lahmann Richmond, J. C. Buckley, P. A. Mantell Waterhouse. Dignan Peacock

Majority against, 13.

Clause negatived.

Bill reported, and read a third time. On the question, That the Bill do pass,

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN said,—I take this opportunity of recording my protest, in the strongest manner in which I can make it, against the alteration which is made in the law dealing with the interests of the property of the Natives on the West Coast. Bill passed.

# NATIVE LAND ALIENATION RESTRIC-TION BILL.

The Hon. the SPEAKER informed the chief, Te Wahanui, that the Council had consented to his delivering an address from the bar of the Council on the subject of this Bill.

Mr. TE WAHANUI. - Mr. Speaker, I have to salute you and the honourable members of this Chamber. I have wished to be able to explain before this Chamber the desires of my people. I have already had an opportunity of addressing the other Chamber on the subject of these desires of my people. The first, the principal, object that I have in view is that I should have the full control and power over my own lands, subject to the authority of His Excellency the Governor. These lands, so far, have not been touched by the hands of Europeans. I have been here some time, and I have seen the Bill introduced by the Government. I saw that there were a great number of teeth in that Bill. The whole body was covered with

teeth, and it also had a tail with a sting in the end. After I had an opportunity of addressing the other Chamber, I found that the Government had made improvements in it. They drew the teeth of that Bill, with the exception of one, which now remains in it. I have a strong objection to that tooth which now remains, and I beseech this House not to give power to that clause as it stands. And now I request that the Court may not have jurisdiction over the districts referred to for the present. I do not say always, but for the present, so that we may have time to consult with the Government and to make satisfactory arrangements; and, when the law is agreed to, then we can discuss the prospects for the future. I do not wish to oppose the Government, but I wish to work together with them, in order that we may arrange to deal satisfactorily with that district. That is the first objection which I That is the first objection which I have. Secondly, I should wish that my Committee—that is, the Native Committee—should be empowered, so that all dealings and transactions within that proclaimed district should be left in the hands of that Committee. But I am glad to say that I see that the Government have been more inclined to deal favourably with us. I make this request now, in order that we may not get into a muddle hereafter, and be made a laughing-stock to all the other colonies and people. I have always considered that this Assembly should be regarded as sacred, and that its work should be sacred, and should be carried out with truth and equity. Thirdly, I wish to see laws carefully framed for the protection of both races, and that the Natives may be treated in the same way as Europeans,. in order that they may live amicably together in the future. I have nothing further to say, except to thank you for allowing me to come here, and to wish you prosperity for the future, and that you may long remain here to deal with the laws in a just and true spirit.

# WESTLAND EDUCATION DISTRICT SUBDIVISION BILL.

On the question, That this Bill be com-mitted,

The Hon. Mr. WILSON said,—I should like to ask whether it is the intention of the Government to proceed with the Bill as originally drawn, or whether they will be prepared to accept the alterations made by the Select Committee.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—The Government submit their Bill to the Committee, and if the Committee choose to amend it the Government will submit.

The Hon. Mr. BONAR.—I trust the Government will give a very decided answer to the question. It appears a monstrous proposition that the Council should be asked by the Select Committee to reverse the whole policy of the Council for the last year. It was decided that it was absolutely necessary that there should be a subdivision of the district, and legislation was carried to effect that; but, owing to the action of the Board, that legislation has been, inoperative. The whole of the elections were

in the hands of the Board of Education, and, unless the Government would submit to blackmailing and pay the whole of the Board's liabilities, the Board refused to carry out the wishes of the Legislature. The Government, very properly, would not submit to that, and the consequence is that the wishes of the Legislature were not carried out. All that is asked by the present Bill is to give effect to what is a decision deliberately arrived at by Parliament last year. The Select Committee's report is opposed to that, and proposes to repeal the action of last year, and to say that there shall be no subdivision of the district, and that the administration shall not be left in the hands of the people. The mistakes have been made by a part of one section of the community. The people are perfectly capable of managing their own affairs, and I think the Council ought not to endeavour to take from the people the power given by Parliament to them. I think the management of the educational affairs of the district should not be put in the hands of Commissioners. There have been difficulties in the past, and the solution of them which the Legislature decided upon was the subdivision of the district; and the proposal to reunite the districts is contrary to the previous decision of Parliament.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—The Government are satisfied with the Bill as carried by the other branch of the Legislature, and have no desire to alter it; but, if the Committee of the Council alter it, the Government will submit. The Government must accept the Bill, for the whole of the education on the West Coast would be stopped if the Bill were thrown out. It would be rather out of place for the Government to repudiate their own measure; but the Government desire to act fairly, and will leave it entirely with the Council to make such amend-

ments as it thinks fit.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—The Hon. Mr Reynolds was a member of the Committee, and undoubtedly approved of the report. I do not care whether an honourable member may be a Minister of the Crown or not, but I should think, when a Committee has been unanimous in agreeing to a report, it is not creditable that a member of that Committee should get up in this Council and absolutely oppose the report. I wish the Hon. Mr. Reynolds had had the courage of his convictions in this Council as he had in the Committee, and then he would save what cannot be a very creditable discussion. Honourable members who represent this district talk about "mistakes" made by the previous Board. "Mistakes" is not the word to use. I shall apply no epithets, but I will tell the Council what have been the acts of this Board. The Education Act has been in force for seven years, and this is the only Board which has brought its affairs into such a position as this. No honourable member is more in favour of local government than I am. I always look upon it as the sheet-anchor of our prosperity, and that it should be encouraged in every way. But there must be exceptions, and I hope to be able to show the Council that local government

in education is not possible in that district, at least at present. There has been such a consistent course of wreng proceeding there that I say it is not possible that educational affairs can be properly conducted by any Board in that district. The history of the Board is this: It existed under the old provincial system, and on the coming into force of the present colonial system in 1877 the Board began somewhat in debt. They went on in debt, and got a subsidy of £2,000 to relieve them. That amount rapidly disappeared, and they have been going on continually since getting into debt. And in what way were the debts contracted? The Board used to sit once at Hokitika, and I should think, from the state of things, it was not satisfactorily conducted there.

The Hon. Mr. BONAR.—Yes, it was.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—Well, a debt was created; and I should say it was not satisfactorily conducted. Then, the northern part of the district-the Greymouth District-considered that Hokitika had had its turn, and they literally did this: They increased the number of schools so as to increase the votingpower, and quite unnecessarily, thus dissipat-ing the funds. This was done to transfer the seat of the Board to Greymouth; and the result is that at present the Board is £5,000 in debt, contracted in a very few years. It is almost incredible that these things should happen. The Hon. Mr. Bonar says the Board may have made "mistakes." Well, I will ask the Council to consider whether the things I am going to mention are mistakes. The initial mistake was, I suppose, that the Board bought, from its Chairman, a leasehold building at Greymouth for £630—a most extravagant price, for I am told it was worth comparatively very little. That is one thing. They also contracted with another member of the Board for a quantity of books to the extent of £2,000, the bulk of which are now in stock, and are absolutely more than four times what could be ever required. That is not all. They spent £240 a year in their departmental expenses, although the departmental expenses of one of the richest Boards, that of North Canterbury, do not amount to more than a quarter of that sum. They ran into every kind of debt. This £240 is largely made up of travelling expenses. There is a report by the Auditor showing that a num-ber of items are utterly illegal. In the supplementary estimates there is a vote for-" Bill of costs, Arnott and Seabrook v. Westland Educa-tion Board, £209 14s." There is an execution out against the Board, and these books will be seized under it, and I presume this sum is to pay off that execution. There is also a sum of nearly £300 for law-costs, all incurred in the fight that took place between the two districts as to which should have the larger share of this plunder. The Board got heavily in debt, and of course came to the Government for assist-Well, the Government did what any Government would naturally do. They know that they will have to pay the money, and they endeavour to pacify these people as well as they can. Last year they brought down a Bill to

Hon. Mr. Bonar

subdivide the district, which is practically what is moved for now by the Hon. Mr. Reynolds—I think with very great want of judgment. That the Government will have to pay the money I have no earthly doubt, because otherwise it would mean shutting up schools at which there was a very large attendance. No Government could face such a contingency as shutting up the schools. That Bill of last year was passed; and what happened then? The then existing Board was appointed, practically, the Returning Officer for the elec-tion to follow; and the Board refused to open the voting-papers until they were given a guarantee from the Government to pay the whole of this enormous debt of £5,000. The Council will hardly credit it, but, before the Board parted with their functions, although their account was overdrawn, they absolutely drew cheques for over £2,000 in payment of liabilities. I need not say that the cheques were not paid, as the banks do not, as a rule, pay from overdrawn accounts. The Board absolutely gave cheques for works on which no work had been done. Therefore I say it is idle for the Government to think that they will get rid of their responsibility by simply dividing this district, and allowing the educational au-thorities of the district to continue as they have been doing already. Honourable gentle-man who represent this district say that the Board have made some mistakes in the past, but that they will amend in the future. I believe nothing of the kind. I know very well what they will do, after what we have seen of their work during the last six years. They know they will have a hold of the Government, because their schools must be kept open, and therefore they will go on incurring liabili-ties, and will come to the Government to get them paid. That has been going on for the last six years, and that is quite experience enough to tell us what they will do in the future. These eloquent gentlemen tell us that there will be an admirable Board in the future, and speak of the respectable people that will be on it. I should be sorry to think that there were not respectable people among those from whom this Board will be chosen. The main body of miners are a most reputable body of men; but I think there must be another class altogether who have hold of these matters on the West Coast. I should think that there must be a very undesirable class of people, such as speculators and agents, who have got the control of the public affairs of the West Coast for the purpose, as I have shown, of turning them to their own advantage. Did honourable gentlemen ever hear of a Board contracting with one of its own members for his own benefit? That was absolutely contrary to the law, and, if it were worth while, no doubt redress could be obtained. As for the Board acting better in the future, I do not believe in

made a recommendation with regard to this. Bill, and it rests with the Council to say whether it will put things back into the old position, merely dividing the education district into two, when there would be two Boards instead of one. I venture to say that, if that is done, next session will not arrive without this matter being brought up again. A new debt will have been accumulated, the present debt will not have been paid, and there will be another chaos which Parliament will be asked to settle. If the Hon. Mr. Reynolds and other honourable gentlemen can persuade the Council that the course they propose is right, I have no more to-say, and I shall not interfere further. I have recommended the Council to take the course the Committee has suggested, and I have givenreasons why that course should be taken; and, if the Council thinks fit to disregard the report-of the Committee and the facts which have been laid before it, I shall take no more steps in the matter.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.—I hope the recommendation of the Committee will be adopted. There is no doubt that the administration of the Education Act in the Westland Education District has been a scandal, and has set the worst possible example to the young people of the district. But the action of the Government in this case I think we can very well understand. The Bill had been passed in another place with the consent of a majority; and therefore it is not to be expected that here the Government will take a course in opposition to the Bill, as it has been passed by that majority. As I understand the Hon. Mr. Reynolds, they leave it to be settled by the Council. The Council has appointed a Committee, who have taken evidence and submitted a recommendation; and I hope we shall be guided by that recommendation as far as possible.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—The Hon. Mr. Bonar did not state the case as fully as. I think is desirable, and I will therefore supplement the deficiencies of his statement as far as I can. He did not tell the Council that the normal expenditure in that district is in excess of the revenue, and that, if the district. were divided, the expenses of administration would be very greatly increased; so that, if its revenue was unequal to the expenditure before, it will be still less equal when the dis-trict is divided. The Committee on this subject had the benefit of the evidence of Dr. Hislop, and had the advantage, also, of hearing statements from other gentlemen, who attended for the purpose of affording the Committee the benefit of their opinions. came out quite clearly that it is absolutely indispensable that educational matters in that district should be put—temporarily, at any rate—on an entirely new footing. Although, possibly, if the district were divided, one porthese sudden reformations at all. Their action during the past years shows that they have utterly neglected their duty, and therefore we should be careful before we trust them with and the expenditure would be greatly increased. The whole education system in that district is

disorganized. Feeling runs high, apparently, and localism, one of the curses of New Zealand, is rampant in that locality. The result is that some strong measures are requisite in order to restore some equilibrium. Now, it appeared to the Committee that the best way was to place temporarily—not permanently—the power in the hands of the Government of reorganizing the educational establishment on the Coast. It is not intended that that power shall be exercised for more than two years, but during that time it would be their duty to revise the whole proceedings and to bring the expenditure within the income. After things are restored to an equilibrium we can consider the propriety of restoring the management to a local Board, and at that time we may probably, with a view of allaying local irritation, sanction the division of the district into two. But meanwhile, and until an equilibrium is restored between expenditure and revenue, it is absolutely necessary that some such step as this should be taken. There are, in the history of all peoples, times of crisis, when the appointment of some-thing like a dictatorship is necessary in the interests of the community; and it appeared to the Committee that there was such a crisis in the history of educational matters on the Coast, and that it was to the interests of the people there, as well as to the interests of the community at large, that these local powers should be temporarily withdrawn, and that the power of administration should be lodged in an officer of the Government until an equilibrium was established. I trust the recommendation of the Committee will be adopted. I believe it will be to the interest of the whole district; and I have no doubt whatever that, at the expiration of the two years, the power may be again intrusted to a local Board, when possibly it may be advantageous to divide the dis-

trict into two, as is proposed by this Bill.

The Hon. Mr. BARNICOAT.—Only the very weightiest reasons—reasons much more weighty than have yet been adduced—would lead me to vote for taking the administration of the Education Act out of the proper hands at Westland and placing it in those of a Commissioner. I was a member of the Select Committee last year which considered a Bill similar in its provisions to that introduced this session, and the Committee heard a great deal of evidence, which led to the belief in the necessity of dividing the education district. Among other reasons it was shown that the Westland Education District, stretching a hundred miles or more along the coast, with its seat of business of necessity towards one end, was costly and in-convenient in its working. I am not going to convenient in its working. defend the expenditure of the Westland Education Board; but I believe that, whether administered by a Commissioner or a Board or Boards, it will be extremely difficult to keep the expenditure within the income, so long as the present allowance for head-money under the Education Act exists. Notwithstanding the higher prices which rule at the West Coast, and the consequently greater cost of carrying out the educational system there, no more on the West Coast are altogether exceptional.

funds are at the disposal of the Board than in the rest of the colony. This fact seems to some extent to account for the difficulties into which the late Education Board fell, and I think that to refuse the district the administration of its own educational affairs is to subject it to an indignity and a penalty which it has not justly inversed.

has not justly incurred. The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN.—I am not going even to try to defend the action of the late Education Board of Westland; but I must appeal to the good feelings of honourable members to judge what an indignity it is proposed to put on a population of ten or twelve thousand people for the action of the nine men of whom the Education Board consisted. That large number of people could not but feel aggrieved if deprived of what every English community so highly prizes—that is to say, the power of electing their own local men to manage their own local affairs. The Education Act is very much prized by the greater part of the community; and, although these nine people have failed to show that capacity for administration which might have been expected from them, still it is very hard that the whole community should be punished for that. After all, it is nothing but punishment Rather than this, I would acquiesce in power being given to the Government to nominate the whole Board. It is not to be feared that action like that which has taken place within the last year or two will ever be repeated. I must remind honourable members, and particularly those who formed the Committeeand who no doubt took great pains to ascertain the actual state of affairs—that the deficit is not nearly so large as might be imagined. The statement of the Auditor shows there are debts to the amount of £5,500; but in this is included £800 for work never even begun, and therefore that amount is a set-off. Then, there is £1,800 which has been spent for repairs and buildings; and I would remind honour-able gentlemen that for more than a year that Board never received a farthing out of the so-called Building Fund, the share of which for Westland would be about £1,800, and that, therefore, may be considered as an asset, and as reducing the real deficit which appears in the accounts of the late Board. Honourable members will find that the total amount asked for by the Government to pay the just dues—I say the just ones—is only £3,300, an amount which is very much smaller than the nominal deficit, the difference being the £800 I have referred to, which was never spent. and other amounts which the Government decline to pay, and rightly so. The question, therefore, before the Council really resolves it self into this: If the Government should feel inclined to leave the management of educational affairs to another body of local men, to be chosen out of ten or twelve thousand people can we expect that this maladministration will occur again? For my part, I may say I do not think these things will occur again. It ought

Hon. Mr. Waterhouse

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There are many outlying districts on the West | Coast, and it cannot be expected that the capitation allowance which is sufficient in other places will enable educational affairs to be administered there so satisfactorily as in more settled districts. I do not for a second undertake to excuse the way in which the administration has been carried on of late - in fact, there is every reason to complain of that; and I think nothing better could have been done than to carry the Bill introduced by the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse, in order to make the gentlemen responsible who have been careless with money that did not belong to them. For all that, I hope that honourable members will take into account that it would be almost an insult to the rest of the population if the report of the Committee were adopted. Motion agreed to.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 2.-Repeal of "The Westland Education District Subdivision Act, 1883.'

The Hon. Mr. WILSON moved, To strike out all the words after "repealed," with a view of inserting the following: "and the subdivision of the Education District of Westland, thereby treated, is hereby abolished."

The Committee divided on the question, "That the words be retained."

AYES, 7.

Johnson, G. R. Barnicoat Dignan Henderson Reynolds. Bonar Buckley, G.

Noes, 9.

Richmond, J.C. Acland Hart Fraser Pharazyn Waterhouse Wilson. Grace Pollen

Majority against, 2.

Amendment agreed to. Bill reported, and read a third time.

TRADE WITH INDIA.
The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I have a matter of some importance to bring before the Council. It is a matter referring to the frozenmeat trade and the woollen industry. On the 9th of last month Sir Julius Vogel forwarded the following telegram to Sir James Fergusson :-

"Is there any prospect of New Zealand frozen mutton and fine woollen fabrics finding a market in India? Your reply to New Zealand will greatly oblige."

To this, the following reply has been re-

"Bombay, 5th November.—Sir James Fergusson to Sir Julius Vogel.—Mutton experiment feasible; but more hopeful Calcutta. If desired, would suggest local agent to arrange. European daily consumption of mutton, Bombay, 200 sheep. Natives, except Parsees, eat only fresh-killed."

I think the thanks of this Council and the colony are due to His Excellency Sir James Fergusson for the kindly interest he has taken with regard to this matter. He has been at considerable trouble in getting the information and in sending the telegram, and I think it | misdoings of Government agents in connection

right to place the information before the Coun cil as soon as possible.

## NATIVE LAND ALIENATION RESTRIC-TION BILL.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY. - Sir, we have listened with a very great deal of pleasure to the able speech made by the very influential chief, Wahanui, who addressed this Council. He informed us that the sting had been taken out of a certain animal-namely, the Bill described by him. No doubt he referred to the Bill now before the Council. The object of the Bill is to prevent dealings by private individuals,. who may be better known as "landsharks," regarding the lands through which it is intended that the railway shall pass. It will be in the recollection of honourable members that a resolution was passed with reference to the construction of a line of railway between Wellington and Auckland to connect Wellington with Auckland; and, for the purpose of protecting the interests of the Natives and the interests of the public, it has been deemed necessary to introduce a Bill of this character, so as to prevent dealings by private individuals with Native lands through which the railway may pass. I have here a plan showing a very large area of land which may be affected, directly or indirectly, by the railway; and, although it contains a much greater area than may be necessary, still it has been deemed desirable to get as large an area as possibly can be got, with the view of protecting the interests which I have described. The Bill contains nothing except that, and, although it restricts purchase by private individuals, it does not restrict purchase by the Government, and for this reason: It may be found necessary, in constructing the railway, for the Government to acquire land through which the railway may pass. With that object only in view this Bill has been introduced. I move, That it be now read a second time.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN. - Honourable gentlemen who listened to the speech made at the bar to-day by Wahanui will probably have noted that, in the approval which he gave to this Bill, he made one reservation, and that was that no dealings whatever with land within the prescribed boundaries should be permitted. The Bill as it stands does now give to the Government the power of dealing—not, as my honourable friend the Colonial Secretary has told the Council, with land for the line of railway, but-for the whole of the land included within these boundaries, estimated to contain about three and a half million acres of land. Now, those who, like myself, remember what the character of the dealings of the Government in the purchase of Native land has been within the last six or seven years, can feel no very great satisfaction in an exception being made, as it is made in this case, in favour of the Government. I venture to say that, whatever may have been the misdoings of private individuals in dealing in Native lands, they have been equalled if not exceeded by the 432

with the acquirement of Native land from time to time. I see, therefore, at present, no reason why so much power as this should be given to this Government or to any Government, under these circumstances, until the Assembly itself has had an opportunity of deciding upon the policy of the Government in dealing with Native lands—an opportunity which I understand it is intended shall be given to the Assembly at its next session. I suppose this Bill will, in due course, be submitted to the Native Affairs Committee; and I think that, either in the Native Affairs Committee or in this Council, some provision ought to be made which would restrain the Government from dealing with the Native lands within these boundaries until the Native title has been That is the point which lies nearest to the heart and desires of these Native people; and the system which has hitherto prevailed, unfortunately, in this colony, of dealing with individuals for their undivided interests in tribal property has been the cause of dissatisfaction in the Native mind. It is to put a stop to that that all the agitation prevails amongst the Natives; and the desire is to re-store to the tribes and the hapus of tribes authority over the tribal estates. I think that, seeing that we are anxious at present to respect the desires of the Natives in all matters relating to their lands, we should take great care not to throw the door open to abuses such as may not impossibly occur; and that we should declare that we would prevent, or endeavour to prevent, any dealings whatever in Native lands until the Native title had been ascertained by the Courts of the colony. that can be done very easily in this Bill by a short clause defining the meaning of the words "Native owners;" and I hope that, either in the Council or in the Native Lands Committee, this precaution will be taken against the abuses that might otherwise occur under the Act.

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—I think this Bill will be of great advantage to the Natives; but there are some alterations that I think ought to be made. The word "Native," which is used on every occasion, is, I think, a wrong one: Our children who are born here are natives of New Zealand. In other parts of the world proper names are given to the aborigines. In Fiji they are called Fijians; in Tonga, Tonguese; and why should we not call the Maoris by their right name? Then, the interpretation of the word "Native" excludes women, and that will have to be remedied. I am delighted to see that a penal clause is inserted, and that any person committing a breach of the Act will be liable to a penalty of not less than £100 and not exceeding £500, and also liable to a term of imprisonment not exceeding fifteen months. I think that will have the desired effect, and will put a stop to the miserable dealings in Native lands that have been carried on. Eighteen months ago some Maori lands passed through the Native Land Court, and, of this, 68,000 acres upon the East Coast, within a short distance of Tauranga,

were sold at 2s. an acre. We never hear of these things. How is it these transactions are No doubt a fortune will be made concealed? out of that. The Natives, whenever they come to make a bargain with Europeans, are sure to get the worst of it; and I am very glad to see that the Government are to exercise over these lands the pre-emptive right, which has been in abeyance, but which was given in the Treaty of Waitangi. I very much approve of the Bill. The Hon. Mr. G. R. JOHNSON.—Well, Sir,

it seems to me that this Bill goes a little further than it should do, inasmuch as the boundaries in the schedule include, as far as I have been able to gather, land which has been occupied by Europeans for some years, and which is held, I think, under Crown grants. I think it would be undesirable that that land should be so included. I refer to a district in the Hawke's Bay Province called With regard to the remarks which have fallen from the Hon. Captain Fraser, I do not think I ought to allow his statement to go unchallenged respecting the value he placed upon lands which he speaks of as having been sold at 2s. an acre a short time back. I can only say this: that, if I wished to bring about great pecuniary loss to the honourable gentleman, I should wish he had purchased it at 2s. an acre. This land is dense fern land, very difficult to approach; there are no roads to it; and I can say most positively that no profit can be made out of land of that description without large expenditure upon it. There may be a small piece of it here and there that is valuable and available at once; but, as a rule, this land requires years and years to become of value, and a constant drain of money to make it pay, though in the course of time it will pay. The Hon. Mr. REEVES.—Sir, I differ from

the honourable gentleman who has just sat down. In his remarks regarding this Bill I understood him to say that it went too far. I think that it does not go far enough, and I shall take the opportunity of moving an amendment, when in Committee, which I have no doubt will meet with the acceptance of the Government; but, whether or no, I shall ask the opinion of this Council upon it. The amendment I wish to move is, That the words after "Native lands," in section 3, be omitted, and, with these, the schedule to the Bill. That will make the provisions of the Bill applicable to dealings with all Native lands. Sir, when we recall the history of the dealings of this colony with the Natives in regard to their land I think that we must admit it is a history that we can by no means congratulate ourselves upon. It has been, on the part of successive Governments, one feeble course of maladministration, and, on the part of the people, one continued course of chicanery and deceit. have seen Native Minister after Native Minister, when freshly appointed, come down to the other House and declare his intention of reforming the whole system of dealing with Native lands, taking the matter into the hands of the Government, and removing it from those of speculators and their disgraceful agents who

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have cast so much dishonour upon this colony in these dealings with Native lands. But all these promises, all these good intentions, have vanished away—melted away under some unknown and unseen influences; and, session after session, nothing is done. If the Council will now rise to the occasion and join with me in carrying this amendment they will embrace an opportunity of doing a vast amount of good to the Europeans, to the Natives, and to the colony at large. The late period of the session, and the hurried manner in which the Bill has been brought before us, absolutely prevent me from doing any justice whatever to this subject. The annals of our dealings with Native lands are full of instances which would support my proposition in the strongest possible manner. I could, if I had time, point out a thousand instances from our Blue Books in support of the proposition I now bring forward. If the Council will only pass this — if they will stop at once all dealings with Native lands-they will afford the Government a fair opportunity during the recess - they will force upon the Government, as they would on any other Government in the circumstances, the necessity of grappling with this question and bringing down a complete and worthy law on this subject, and one which would command and receive the support of both Houses and the support of the public. I shall take the opportunity, in Committee, of moving my amendment, and I trust I shall receive the support of the Government: at any rate, I shall take the sense of the Council upon it.

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL.—Sir, the Standing Orders have been so far suspended as to allow Government Bills to pass through all stages in one day. I would ask whether reference of a Bill of this kind to the Native Affairs Committee is not a "stage" of the progress of the Bill, and, if that is so, how far the suspending of the Standing Orders will affect that reference. I do not say it is absolutely necessary that the Bill should be so referred, nor do I think so; but I ask the question, as a point of

The Hon. the SPEAKER. — I was already considering that point. There is considerable difficulty, because we have got to an evening mitting, and the authority is to allow Bills to pass "all stages" in one day, and a Select Committee does not, except by special leave, sit whilst the Council is sitting; so, altogether, it seems to me that we are on the horns of a dilemma. But, in answer to the precise question, I am bound to rule that reference to Select Committees is a stage in the progress of Bills. The Standing Order is that all Bills and schedules affecting Native lands or waste lands shall be referred to the respective Committees after the second reading.

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL.—I am not going to waste time in discussing the Bill. It is nearly twenty years since I took part in the discussion of Bills on Native affairs. I have listened with interest to the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Reeves. It is rather pleasant to hear that any one now entertains the idea that,

if a strict injunction is issued by Parliament against the acquisition of Native lands, there will be a Government which will have the courage to give effect to it. I am not so sanguine as that; and the Government themselves have not asked for a power which they know they would not dare to exercise. The very lifeblood of the Government—at any rate, as regards its influence in the North Island—is the acquiring of Native lands, on the good old system which prevailed formerly, namely, the getting of the largest possible amount of land for the least possible price. But I rose as I felt bound to refer to a special point in connection with this Bill, because I have been in conversation with Native people affected by it. I refer to the 7th clause. I do hope the Government will devise some means of rendering that clause so clear in expressing what I understand to be their real intention that the Native people will not have their minds disturbed by apprehensions that under it the old system of land-purchase—or the acquisition of Native land by "teasing"—will be introduced into that district. I understand that the object of this clause is to enable the Government to acquire a strip of two chains or so in width right through this block, with a view to the formation of the North Island Trunk Railway. Well, of course the Government may treat with the Natives for that, and the Natives may either consent to sell or not. Now, I think the more distinctly the Government states the modest nature of its requirements the more likely they are to be able to conduct negotiations satisfactorily with the Native owners. As to the mere vague expression "Native owners" here, without any definition of what constitutes a "Native owner," or what the Government will regard as such, I feel it is very objectionable. For my own part, I conceive that, before the title has been investigated by the Native Land Court, there are no Native owners except hapus; and I can very easily conceive that great trouble, ending in an insuperable barrier to further negotiations, may arise if the Government begin to negotiate with people now resident in the block for their claims, however shadowy those claims may be, in this block. Let the Government state honestly and fairly what they intend to do, and let them go to the Natives acknowledged to be of the greatest influence and the greatest owners in the block, and state what they want, and ask the Natives to consider the matter fairly, and deal with them. Do not let the Government revert to the old system of dealing with men who possibly have no claim whatever to the land, and so acquiring an interest which, on investigation, is, in nine cases out of ten, found to have no foundation whatever, except in the dishonesty of the people concerned. I hope the time is past now when the more dishonest and deceifful a Native was the moreuseful he was in transferring Native land to the Government. That was the case in the old times, but I hope we have done with that sort of thing now. I do ask the Hon. the Colonial Secretary to assure the Council that he

will make the clause distinctly express what I understand the Government intend to do under it—what the Government really contemplate the acquisition of, under this clause, and no

The Hon. Mr. WILSON. - I shall support this Bill, and I shall also support the amendment to be proposed by the Hon. Mr. Reeves. I cannot agree with the Hon. Mr. Mantell in his remarks as to not recognizing any Native owners until the land has passed through the Native Land Court. That exceedingly wellinformed Native chief who addressed us today has, I understand, no intention of allowing the Court to sit there at all—which I applaud in him. It is a great mistake to imagine that this Native Land Court was intended for the benefit of the Natives. It was established on the hypocritical pretext that the Natives required It was nothing of the kind. It was brought in under pressure from a considerable body of people, commonly called "land-sharks," whose object, as the Hon. Mr. Mantell has said, is the acquiring of the greatest possible amount of land at the least possible price.
The Hon. Mr. MANTELL.—I alluded not to

"land-sharks," who were compelled to give something like a decent price, but to Govern-

ments.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON. - The honourable gentleman seems to deprecate the buying of Native land by the Government, and to give the preference to the "land-sharks." I do not agree with that; I should rather be glad to see the land hought on fair terms by the Government. Every Government since I have been in New Zealand have come down with great promises as to the reforms they would make, but they have made no reform at all. A series of Acts have been passed which have gone all in the one direction—to give greater facility in the acquisition of lands to the promoters of those Acts. The Natives have never been considered at all. I have, unfortunately, had occasion to look through those Acts too often, and find that there is no intention to benefit the Natives by them. In the Land Court difficulties arose from time to time in completing purchases which were of a character that I do not care to describe, and immediately the aid of Parliament was invoked to remove those difficulties, not for the benefit of the Natives, but to facilitate the purchase of land. For once here is a session in which there is not one of those Bills for the purpose of patching up some of those doubtful things. I give the Government credit for that; for ever since I have been in Parliament I do not think there has been one session before this in which some tinkering Bill has not been brought down to enable Native-land-purchasers to complete matters which have got into a state of confusion. I do not believe for one moment that Parliament is now in such a virtuous frame of mind as to end all these transactions. It is far too good a thing. There is business of this character being done now. Even if the Council should pass the clause the Hon. Mr. Reeves is. It might perhaps have been that during proposes, I do not believe it will be accepted the first year the people interested in buying

in another place; but, at all events, I shall support it, and I should like to see it carried here. With respect to the objections made by the chief who addressed us to-day, I was unable to follow him as to what his real objection to the 6th clause was. At first sight I thought that clause unnecessary; it is difficult to believe there are any, but possibly there may be, lands in this schedule already dealt with, and I think it proper that no such liess should be registered. I think that, when a Native chief like that, who professes so good a disposition towards the English race, expresses a fear of any clause, we should not be going out of our way to yield to his wishes; but I think Wahanui is misinformed as to the effect of this clause. I do not see anything in it that any Native can complain of. It prohibits every one except the Government from dealing with the Natives, which, from conversations I have had with the Natives, I know is what they want. I shall have pleasure in supporting the amendment of the Hon. Mr. Reeves, and in other respects I do not see any objection to this Bill.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—So far as I understand the intentions of the Government by this Bill, I am happy to say I am able to give them my hearty support. Wide as the powers of my hearty support. clause 7 are, I do not feel at all alarmed that the members of this Assembly will ever again tolerate the Government going, as in former days, largely into the purchase of Native lands. I should never support a Bill by which the Government proposed to do such a thing. I take it that this Bill is of a merely temporary nature, merely reserving the land through which the line passes, and that at a future time we shall have legislation in order to settle the country through which the railway will run. I do not think the Government mean to recommence buying land; but I think it is necessary they should have this power given them, first, to acquire the land through which the railway will run, and, in the next place, they should absolutely deal with the Natives, in order to secure a concession from them for the value that will be given to their land by the railway. A large concession should be got by gift from the Natives, because the amount of benefit to be derived by them from a railway running through their land is enormous; and I should say the Government would be quite justified in demanding a concession from them in return for that benefit. However much I may applaud the Hon, Mr. Reeves for his suggestion—and I have always had the same ideas as he has on this subject—I think when he has a little more knowledge of what is done in the Legislature he will see it is not quite so easy to pass a pro-per Native Land Bill. In 1870 a Native Land Bill was proposed whereby the Natives would have been compelled to sell their lands through the ordinary channels; and I venture to say that if that measure had passed into law settlement throughout the North Island would by this time have been very much larger than it

Native land would have set up such opposition that the thing would not have worked at first; but I venture to say that, with a little patience, that opposition would have broken down, and then large areas of land would have gone into the hands of Europeans, and the country would have been settled to great advantage. I wish to point out to my honourable friend Mr. Reeves that there are a large number of interested people, on both sides of the House, who will not allow a Native Land Bill adverse to their interests to go through, and those from the South whom you would expect to give assistance to the work would, through party exigencies, be compelled to vote against carrying a proper Bill through. With these two interests hanging together, it has been hitherto impossible to get a good Native Land Bill through the Legislature. And my honourable friend will find that Governments have to succumb; the Government in 1870 succumbed, and I dare say it will be the same with other Governments to follow. But I take it that this Bill, reserving as it does a large area of country, paves the way more clearly for the Government to attempt a good Native Land Bill in the future. I believe this is a stepping stone to a good Act, if they have the manliness to attack it. I have always felt very strongly on this Native land question, because I feel it is necessary that some steps should be taken in order to produce a Native Land Bill to let the North Island go ahead. It is a fact that the progress of the North Island has been blocked by large areas of Native land remaining unopened, and the people of this Island have been unable to settle their country as we have done in the South. That has kept the North Island back. The South Island may be better circumstanced in some respects, as there are large areas of good land on the seaboard; but, from experience, I know that there are patches of good land throughout the North Island, although it is only in patches, and not all together, as we have it down south. There may, therefore, on that account, be more difficulty in settling it; but still it is capable of carrying a large population, and I have always felt that it was a sad thing to see the hindrances to the settlement of the North Island through the difficulty of opening up Native land. A great deal has been said about some land being sold for 2s. I have travelled through millions of acres in the North Island that I would be glad to see taken at a gift, if people would improve it and settle it, and I think they would get it Any one who has travelled from dear then. Napier to Ohinemutu must have seen that the whole of the land all along is not worth taking up; and so, though we hear a great deal about land being bought for 1s. or 2s. an acre, I say men who take up and improve much of that land pay very dearly for it. I hope this Bill will pass, and that it will be the stepping-stone to a really good Native Land Bill, that will finally settle these Native lands in the early future.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND.—I am well pleased with the general idea of this Bill, and I could heartily wish to be able to accept the amendment proposed by the Hon. Mr. Reeves but I cannot say that I hold the same hopeful view as my honourable friend as to the result, partly, perhaps, because I have been longer on the face of the globe than he, and partly because I have been more closely connected with these Native affairs than my honourable friend has been. I do not plead guilty on behalf of the Government of the country to what my honourable friend has imputed to them: if you would impute weakness to a man who was not able to contend with the Waimakariri in flood, then all of us would be weak. If we go far enough back we see that the Government of New Zealand, in 1858, desired to rid itself of the very invidious duty of negotiating with the Natives for land; but we had at that time a Governor who objected to the course proposed, and he reserved the Bill for assent at Home, and recommended it to be disallowed, and it was disallowed. This right of every one to purchase lands of Natives was not, as has been said, thrust upon the Government by landsharks. No doubt there were men anxious to invest their capital in land-call them landsharks, or what you like. There was a large party of that kind; but, to my own personal knowledge, the claim for freedom to the Natives to deal with their own property was raised on the side of the missionaries. I had that from the greatest of the missionaries-Bishop Selwyn himself. He said to me on one occasion, "I claim this right." I replied, "You claim a great estate for your flock. You remember 'how hardly shall those that have riches enter the kingdom of heaven;'" and the reverend Bishop had nothing to say in reply. It was certainly forced on Parliament by pressure from without, but it was also forced upon them by a strong well-organized party in the It is not necessary to go further Legislature. into this. I have gone thus far to show that, in the state in which the politics of the country are with railway rings, harbour rings, and rings for every possible interest, forming an inextricable puzzle in the Legislature, such an amendment as that proposed by the honourable member is absolutely certain to fail. I should be glad if it were possible; but, at this late period of the session, one has to consult the honourable gentleman in charge of the Bill before taking an extraordinary step of that kind. I wish to say that I was for some years in that long list of persons who it is alleged led the country into the state, with reference to Native lands, in which it now finds itself; but I can say that I never, on behalf of the country, attempted to peddle for an acre of land, and that I endeavoured, as far as possible, to get reason out of that institution which we established—the Native Land Court—that Frankenstein power created by the State,-Monstrum, . . . informe, ingens, cui lumen ad-

emptumwhich, blinded by its own fanaticism and vanity, proceeded remorselessly through thick and thin; and which insisted on finding what never existed—a Native land law—and insisted upon

manufacturing it if it did not find it. It might have been a powerful means of solving difficulties, but, headed as it was by a gentleman of great ability and enormous obstinacy, unwilling to listen to advice or to hear criticism, it was fated from the first to fail, and to fail in consequence of that fact which has been referred to by Mr. Mantell this evening, that it is not the individuals but the hapus who are the owners, and because it insisted, in the business of the Court, in shutting out all who did not appear, using the old cynical maxim of lawyers, De non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est The cause of the failure of the Land Act was the want of wisdom in the administration, and not in the principle itself. I do not often trouble the Council with demands upon its attention on my own behalf, but I must say that the work we have been doing here in the matter of Native land transactions has brought forcibly before me the very great injustice which was done to the Government of which I was a member, and to myself personally, in connection with the West Coast reserves question; to which I hope I may be allowed, as a personal matter, to refer. The inextricable confusion of the Native affairs on that Coast would have been avoided, I believe, had all succeeding Governments taken the action which the Stafford Government in 1866, 1867, and 1868 took in the matter of the settlement of the West Coast. Upon the earliest symptom of the return of peaceful relations on the part of the Natives of the West Coast, we met them more than half-way, went out to meet them, and planted them upon reserves; and I may say that the first step towards paci-fication was made when the northern hapu and the Ngatiruanui Tribe were planted upon reserves which were duly set apart and fixed by an Order in Council under the New Zealand Settlement Act, which they still occupy, and in which are some of the leases we have been considering to-day. The district between Waingongoro and Waitotara remained at peace, so far as regards its own inhabitants, from the date of those reserves; and it was only by the inroads of Titokowaru that the settlers were disturbed at all. I state this because I feel that, in the reports of the Commissioners which have been alluded to in this matter, it would have been but bare justice if they had recognized what had been done by the Government of Mr. Stafford and by myself. I thank honourable members for listening to me thus far, as I know I am out of order; but I missed the opportunity of referring to this before, and I desire to put on record this very strong feeling of mine, that, at the time when the history of the country is written, my name may not be only pil-leried, in that "compendium of falsehood" of which we have heard before, as a purchaser of Maori heads; but that it will be recorded that I and the Government to which I belonged—for I truly represented them in that—were anxious at all times to step forward and to bring about reconciliation and peace. Now, as to this particular Bill, I should like very much to believe that the Government will, at the very earliest

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moment possible—if not in this Bill, at all events very early in the recess-make known in a distinct manner to the Natives what their intentions are with respect to the land. I hope they will not seek to buy much land; I hope they will buy no more than may be necessary for the purposes of the railway; and that, after that, they will accept of this very reasonable proposition: that they will put all the Native lands—as soon as the Natives are willing to deal with us, and when we are willing to deal with them—under the charge of the Land Department, to be dealt with for their benefit, with only such deductions as are necessary for surveys and administration. If that is the issue of the Bill, it will show a fine example to the country, and we shall see effected in the most peaceful manner the adjustment of all the difficulties in connection with the Native land question. I should be very glad if the Government could see its way to accept my honourable friend's amendment, but the difficulties of detail are extremely great: moreover I do not think they can do so, considering what I referred to before - the intricate "ring-puzzle" which is exhibited in the Legislature at the present time.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE. - I would just notice the remarks of my honourable friend to say that, if the amendment to which he refers fails to be carried, the failure will not be entirely due to the influence of the "rings;" but it will be because there is a large portion of the community, who have nothing whatever to do with rings or landpurchasers—who hold themselves aloof from all these things—and yet have arrived at the con-clusion that it is undesirable for the Government to interfere with the purchase of Native lands. They regard it as I regard it, that all the Native troubles have arisen from land deal ing with the Natives, and more especially from dealings with Native lands that have not passed through the Native Land Court. I would be not only by the "rings," but by the assistance of this large portion of the community, that the amendment would be defeated. My honourable friend says "No, no," to the statment that the troubles with the Natives have arisen through the purchasing of lands before they had passed through the Native Land Court; but I have only to refer to the history of the colony to show that. I am not aware that any of the out breaks have arisen in connection with pur chases subsequent to the land passing through the Court; but I am aware that great trouble arose from other purchases of land, and espe cially from the purchasing of land by the Go vernment before the titles were authoritatively decided upon by a Court of justice. I trus that, if the Bill passes into law, it will not be another illustration of what frequently occur in the history of our legislation—that the Act which we pass are allowed by the Government to become practically a dead letter There was a provision introduced in the las Native Land Act imposing a penalty upon al dealings in connection with Native lands before

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the title had been decided upon by the Native I and Court; and yet, if I am correctly informed, that provision is allowed to be a deadletter. That has a very injurious effect. I am told that persons have entered into negotiations to a very large extent indeed for the purchase of Native lands prior to the land having passed the Court, and yet that, although the Go-vernment, by the legislation of last year, were authorized to take proceedings, no proceedings whatever, up to the present time, have been taken; and I very much fear it may be the same in connection with this measure. is the use of imposing penalties if the Govern-ment will not enforce them? I trust we shall have the assurance of the Government that, if this Bill is passed into law, the penalties will be enforced, and will not be allowed to remain a dead-letter on the Statute Book. The effect of passing laws of this character, in which the penal clauses are not put in force, is that—while persons of standing, persons of character, will observe the law, and the Natives are thus not brought into contact with them -the Natives are left to people who may fairly be termed land-sharks, to people undeserving of their confidence, and who bring a reproach upon the European character. Our legislation hitherto in regard to these matters has been to play into the hands of these people, and to prevent persons of standing and position having anything to do with Native affairs. There are a large number of persons of standing and position who lay it down as a fixed rule never to have anything to do with Native affairs, and the result is that the Natives are brought into contact with the very lowest class of Europeans, who pander to their vices in order to obtain their lands, and who, for infringing the law, are not punished by the law as they ought to be. I do sincerely trust that, if this Bill passes into law, the penal clauses will not be allowed to remain dead-letter. I shall support the Bill. think it is fair that, if the Government make a railway through Native territory, some portion of the benefit likely to arise to the land from the work should go to recoup the ex-pense of the undertaking, and I think it is in-flicting no injustice on the Natives that we should reserve to the Government the power of dealing with these particular lands, because, undoubtedly, the effect of the railway will be to increase the value of the land eight-, ten-, or twenty-fold.

The Hon. Mr. WILLIAMSON.—Sir, I do not rise to oppose the Bill. At the same time, I have thought, and think still, that the Natives have been altogether too much interfered with. It is now over forty years since I first attended a sale of Native land in this country. There was then no Court necessary. The Natives were assisted by a European interpreter, and they sold a very large area of land in blocks of various sizes from, I believe, an acre up to three or four hundred acres. They arranged the payment among themselves, and about the settlement or the sale of that land from that day to this there has never been a dispute or

a claim, and it is perhaps as valuable land as there is in the colony. My own idea of how the Natives should be dealt with is this: They should be told by the Government that they would not be pressed to sell their land; and Europeans should be told that they might use their own discretion in buying land, but that, as soon as they became the owners of the land, they would be made, if there was no Road Board in the district, to contribute rates to the nearest Road Board, for the purpose of opening up the country. I think that, from the first, the right of pre-emption, perhaps in a modified form, should have been retained by the Government. When the Government appointed Native Assessors to a district the district should be declared open for trading, and the Natives should be allowed to sell and the Europeans to buy; and we should have a representative in the Court who would see that any arrangements that were made between the Natives and Europeans for the sale of land were carried out, that the payments were made, and the Court should have to decide whether the party selling the land was the party entitled to sell it. should also be the duty of the Court to order a survey of the land, and to give a certificate to the purchaser which he could present to the office and get a Crown grant issued upon. do not think it comes very well from honourable members from the South Island to able members from the South Island to talk about "land-sharks," and about people having robbed the Natives in the North Island. What have they done in the South Island? What price was given for the land there? Had the Natives no right to that land, although they are few in number, which was not the case with us? They purchased the land at a paltry price of not a farthing an acre, and yet we never hear a word about that; but we often hear remarks about people who have bought land at a shilling and two shillings an acre. We are told that the poor ignorant Natives are robbed of their property; but, so far as my experience goes, there are always people ready to buy a thing when it is to be sold for less than it can be sold again for in the market immediately. It is the doubt about being able to sell again that prevents many people from coming forward, though they are quite ready to abuse those who have come forward. I have heard myself of a Native being told that he was selling his land at a price not at all equal to its value. "Well," he said, "what am I to do? I have offered it to many, and no one will buy it." They said, "You will be able to sell in a future time;" but he replied, "Shall I be here to sell? I want a horse now. I want to ride, and I cannot get a horse unless I give a certain tract of land for it." Can any one say he was wrong in giving that which he had and could not use for that which he had not and wanted to use? It always appears to me in an unpleasant light when I hear people talking of what the early settlers gave for their properties. Those settlers came here at a time when people who think proper to abuse them would perhaps not have come into the country. Even when missionaries were wanted in the country you could not get gentlemen entitled to wear black coats at Home to come out to New Zealand fifteen or sixteen years ago. It was only the prospect of getting black coats when they came that brought them here. Now I find there are plenty of black coats coming, because the country has been since improved by those who spent a large portion of their lives in a place where their lives - during the early period, at all events — were not very safe. I think that this Bill may do good under the circumstances, seeing that a great expendi-ture has to be made upon this land by Europeans; and I think it is only right that the Government should have an opportunity of acquiring land, at all events, for the railway. Whether it would be right for them to deal in these lands is more than I can take upon myself to say. But I think that the sooner the Natives of New Zealand are relieved of their surplus land fairly, the better for them. I think that people are not happy who live with-out regular employment; and the sooner the Natives are brought to such a position that they have to attend to their own affairs, and become workers in the community, the better it will be for the Natives themselves.

Native Land Alienation

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY .-—I had no idea, when moving the second reading of the Bill, that we should have so great a discussion upon the Native policy. I merely refer to this now because of the amendment intended to be moved by my honourable friend Mr. Reeves. I think, if the amendment of that honourable gentleman is seriously considered by the Council, it will be doing the very thing I am sure it would not wish to do—affecting the policy of the Government with regard to dealing with Native lands during the recess. I cannot be a party to carrying out any such suggestion as that which the honourable gentleman has made—that we should, by a clause in this Bill, deal with a question which is likely to affect many persons in the North Island. The question whether the Government are to purchase Native lands, or whether they should ever deprive themselves of the right to purchase Native lands, is one upon which I think there are many different opinions. I hold very strong opinions upon the question myself, which it is unnecessary to refer to now. The Council is indebted to my honourable friend Mr. Waterhouse for the remarks he made with reference to the Bill. He has, as he generally does upon every matter, given the fullest information. and his opinion in regard to this and other matters is always entitled to every consideration from the Council. But there is one thing which I should wish to explain to the Council: that this sketch, which is here before us, is of a very general character. It is, of course, one of those things which had to be done in the greatest possible haste, because, after the line had been decided upon by the House of Representatives, it was necessary to take immediate action, with the view of preventing any interference in the carrying into operation of this scheme of railway construction. I may say

that it is not intended by the Government to take possession of or to purchase the whole of the land within this area. No doubt the land will be limited within a short time. As the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse says, it is only right that, as the Government is likely to expend large sums of money in the construction of this railway to connect two large and impor-tant towns, it should have some of the large advantages likely to be obtained by this re-stricting measure. I do not know that there is anything to reply to. I am glad to see that the Bill has been favourably received; and, if it is the wish of the Council, I shall have no objection to its being referred to the Native Affairs Committee; but I ask that the Committee should not permit of any delay in connection with the matter, and that they will not restrict the action of the Government. I can say to my honourable friend that, so far as the Government is concerned, the penal clauses of this Bill will be put into operation against of-fenders. I should like to see put into operation the penal clauses of the other measure referred This Government has heard of no negotiations which would in any degree bring persons within any of the penal clauses of the Act now in existence; but, if any negotiations of such a character are brought under the notice of the Government, I can assure honourable members that, no matter who the offenders may be, the provisions of the law will be enforced against them.

Bill read a second time.

# WANGANUI HARBOUR BOARD EM-POWERING BILL.

The following reasons of the House of Representatives for disagreeing with the insertion of the word "exercisable" in clauses 9 and 11 were considered :-

"The House of Representatives considers that it is unfair to count all those on the roll who do not vote as against the rating provided in the Bill. That there is no means of ascertaining the number of exercisable votes, and that a dangerous discretionary power is left with the Returning Officer. That, the loan having already been authorized, and the works in process of construction, and a large amount of money having been expended, a serious loss will be entailed should the amendment prevent the sanction of a reasonable majority of the

ratepayers from being obtained."

The Hon. Mr. WILSON said he could have wished to move that the Council agreed with these reasons; but, the matter having been fully discussed there, it was not his intention to do that. He was therefore obliged to move, That the Council insist on its amendments in the Bill, and forward its reasons for such insistance.

Motion agreed to.
The Hon. Mr. WILSON moved, That the Hon. Dr. Grace, the Hon. Dr. Pollen, and the Hon. Mr. J. C. Richmond be a Committee to draft reasons for such insistance.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE said he would not oppose the motion; but, at the same time,

Hon. Mr. Williamson

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he hoped his honourable friend would see the propriety of not going any further with the Bill. He had that evening received a telegram from an influential gentleman at Wanganui, who he believed — but was not sure — was a member of the Harbour Board. He referred to Mr. Watt. Mr. Watt stated that the Board had decided to abandon the Bill till next session, and he (Mr. Waterhouse) imagined from this that the Board itself had come to the conclusion that it was not desirable to proceed with the Bill, seeing the strong diversity of opinion there was on it; and, there being no immediate necessity for proceeding with the Bill, the Board probably hoped, by a little delay, to smooth down the differences that had arisen in the matter, and obtain from the whole community concerned something like unity of action. Probably his honourable friend would shortly receive a communication similar to that he had himself received, which, he thought, pointed out the course most desirable to adopt, in the interests of the locality itself.

The Hon. Mr. WILS()N said he had received no information from the promoters of the Bill, who, he believed, were still prepared to go on with it. The Hon. Mr. Waterhouse had alluded to Mr. Watt as "influential." That gentleman once had influence in Wanganui; but he (Mr. Wilson) did not know that he had now. Mr. Watt at one time thought himself Wanganui; but that was not the case now.

The Committee brought up the following reasons for insistance, which were agreed to by the Council:

"1. That the majority required is a reasonable majority of the ratepayers, because it affords the only satisfactory guarantee that the ratepayers are sufficiently advertised of the permanent liability to which their property will be subjected by the adoption of the proposal.

"2. That the means of ascertaining the number of votes 'exercisable' is to be found by counting the number of votes capable of being exercised by ratepayers previous to the taking

of the poll.

"3. That, as the works in process of construction under the present contract are not completed, it will prove both simple and inexpensive to provide the necessary protection for the end of the pier, which is still in shallow water; therefore no serious loss will be entailed should the amendment prevent the sanction of a reasonable majority of the ratepayers from being obtained."

The Council adjourned at twenty minutes to ten o'clock p.m.

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Committee.

Thursday, 6th November, 1884.

Third Reading — Waste Lands Committee — Gold Fields—Railway Employes Holidays—Creosoting Sleepers — Railways Authorization Bill — Trade with India—Collingwood Coal Fields—Supply— Public Works-Supply.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

THIRD READING. Special Powers and Contracts Bill.

WASTE LANDS COMMITTEE.

Mr. ROLLESTON, in the absence of the Chairman, brought up a report from this Committee, recommending that the Chairman be paid £100 for his services, and moved, That the report be referred to the Government for consideration.

Mr. STOUT regretted that the matter had not been brought up before, so that the Government might have made provision on the supplementary estimates for giving effect to this report. However, if they understood that it was the desire of the House that this payment should be made, they would carry out that de-

Mr. SEDDON thought it was the unanimous feeling of the House that the request should be granted. He wished to do justice to the honourable gentleman who held the position of Chairman of the Waste Lands Committee, for his work was done well; and he (Mr. Seddon) did not see why a similar payment should not be made to him to that which was made to the Chairman of the Gold Fields Committee.

Mr. SHRIMSKI hoped the House would pause before they did anything of the sort that No doubt this proposal was here proposed. came down in consequence of the action taken by the Gold Fields Committee, and he regretted that the House should go on incurring greater liabilities than had hitherto been incurred in connection with these Committees. He looked upon it that an honourable member was placed in a proud position when he was intrusted with the duty of presiding over a body appointed to ascertain what were the requirements of those who petitioned the House, and the honour should be sufficient remuneration without their coming to the House asking for pay. He did not object to this particular vote, but only to the extension of a bad system. If these Chairmen were to be paid, he really saw no reason why members of the Public Petitions Committee, who had to work very hard every day, from the beginning of the session to the end of it, should not also be paid.

Mr. BROWN agreed to a large extent with what had been said by the honourable member for Oamaru. There was a time when the honour of being Chairamn of one of these Committees was quite sufficient payment. The whole subject should be taken into considera-

tion by the House.

Mr. GILLIES wished to raise his voice in the same direction, for it was a matter which the House should be very guarded about. The system that was springing up was one liable to a great deal of abuse. In this particular case there was no reason to fear any abuse; but he felt sure that a system of paying members of the House more than what they were entitled to in the ordinary way as honorarium might be attended with abuse. The public generally had no idea that such payments were made, and he should always raise his voice against the system.

Waste Lands Committee.

Mr. MACANDREW said he had agreed to the report, though he must say he was entirely averse to the payment of Chairmen of Committees. At the same time, other Chairmen were paid, and, as this Committee had important business to perform, and the Chairman had to devote a good deal of time and attention to it, he (Mr. Macandrew) did not see why he should not be paid, if others were. Still, the House appeared to be going in the wrong direc-

tion.

Mr. O'CONOR said the matter had been regarded from a one-sided point of view by members who had hitherto spoken. The principle of payment for special services had been all along recognized in the House, as, for instance, in the case of the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees, and if the House was going to reconsider the question all such payments must be brought under review. It was simply a question of degree. He was, however, at a loss to see what objection there could be to the present system, so long as it was carried out fairly, for the Chairmen of these Committees, by giving their special attention to matters coming before the Committee, saved the time of members generally, and greatly facilitated the progress of work. He hoped this motion would be agreed to, and, if necessary, the whole question could be gone into next session.

Mr. BRYCE said he should support the motion, because he considered that the Chairman of this Committee had just as much work to do as the Chairmen of other Committees, except, perhaps, the Chairman of the Public Petitions Committee. But that was his sole reason; and his supporting the motion on this occasion would not prevent him next session, or whenever the question arose, from voting against all such payments, with the single exception of that made to the Chairman of the

Public Petitions Committee.

Mr. SEDDON moved, That the word "favourable" be inserted in the motion before the word "consideration." The House should in this way express its opinion, so that all the responsibility of paying this money should not rest upon the Government.

Amendment agreed to, and motion amended

and agreed to.

### GOLD FIELDS.

Mr. PYKE brought up a general report from the Gold Fields Committee, and moved, That the report lie on the table, and be printed.

The House divided.

AYES, 53. Atkinson Hirst, H. Ross Ballance Holmes Russell Bevan Johnston 4 8 1 Samuel Shephard Brown Joyce Bruce Lake  $\cdot$  Smith Steward, W. J. Bryce Lance Cadman Larnach Stout Cowan Locke Sutter Dargaville Mackenzie, M. Taiaroa McKenzie, J. Dodson Te Ao Menteath Duncan Thompson, T. Fitzherbert Thomson, J. W. Moss Newman Fraser Tole O'Conor Fulton Turnbull Garrick Pere Walker. Richardson, E. Tellers. Guinness Richardson, G. Pyke Hamlin Seddon. Harper RollestonNoes; 12. Wilson. Barron Peacock Conolly Pearson Tellers. Stewart, W. D. Allwright Gillies

Majority for, 41.

Shrimski.

Trimble

Motion agreed to.

Hursthouse

Levestam

RAILWAY EMPLOYÉS' HOLIDAYS. On the motion of Mr. STOUT, it was ordered, That the questions on the Order Paper be post-

poned till next day

Mr. FITZHERBERT would ask to be allowed to put Question No. 9, addressed to the Minister for Public Works, as follows: If it is his intention to give immediate effect to a resolution of this House of the 9th September last respecting the holidays of railway employes; and, if so, will such railway employes receive a holiday on Monday next, the day on which the Prince of Wales's Birthday will be celebrated? Time was everything, so far as this question was concerned; and he should like to have an answer to it from the Minister that afternoon.

Mr. STOUT said it would be most unfair for the Government to answer one question and not

the others.

Mr. FITZHERBERT would have to move the adjournment of the House. He understood that this question would be answered in the negative. He was quite sure, however, that, if the Minister for Public Works considered this question for one moment, he would not answer it in the negative. On the 9th September last a resolution was passed by the House to the effect that the railway employes should have the usual holidays—the Prince of Wales's Birthday, the Queen's Birthday, Christmas Day, and Good Friday—and he of course concluded that effect would be given to the resolution, immediately to find it was very improbable the railway employés would have a holiday given to them next Monday. He was very much surprised at this, because he always considered that the Minister for Public Works was one of those gentlemen who would deal liberally and fairly with any of their employes.

For that reason he put the question on the Order Paper. It was of great importance that this question should be answered immediately. He understood it was very probable the prorogation would take place next day, and, if his question were answered in the negative, he would be precluded from taking any steps to have the resolution of the House enforced. It was for that reason he had moved the adjournment of the House. This was a question that ought to be fairly considered by all members of the House. The Civil servants had no end of holidays during the year. They had not only the holidays that he had mentioned, but others, as at the opening of Parliament, the reception of the Governor, or any special occasion. They also had a month's holiday every year; and if they desired to have a day or two days to play cricket, or wanted to go to Sydney to play in a football match, they got leave on full pay. It was therefore only fair that the railway employes, who were also Government officials, should have the holidays he had mentioned. At the present time they had not a solitary holiday during the year. They worked hard all the time, and he was quite sure that if the Minister for Public Works was in a blacksmith's shop at Pitone, working hard day after day, he would be very glad to have a holiday. These men were kept working day after day from early morning till late at night, and it was hard that their noses should be kept to the grindstone day after day without any recreation. That was most unfair. They were ruining their health. The House declared that these men should have certain holidays during the year. Those he had mentioned could not interfere with the work of the Railway Department, as they were only for men in the workshops and platelayers. The men in the workshops and platelayers. guards and stationmasters had one week's holiday every year. If they had these holidays, he failed to see why other railway employes should not have holidays also. The foremen in all these workshops—the carpenters' shops, blacksmiths' shops, and so on—were allowed holidays on full pay; and why should their sub-ordinates not have holidays on full pay also? These men were good colonists. A number of them were resident in the district he represented. They were honest, hard-working men, and were acquiring small properties. They had families to keep, and were proving useful colonists - colonists that we ought to be proud of. It was most unfair that, when these railway employés had obtained a holiday, their day's pay should be taken from them. They ought to be treated as the Civil servants were dealt with. The first time that they were recognized as Civil servants was when the 10-per-cent. reduction took place; but, when any advantages were to be given, they were not recognized as Civil servants at all. The argument that the expense would be very great was absurd. He thought the expense of giving these men five holidays in the year would be trifling when compared with the expense of giving Civil servants holidays on all occasions when they chose to ask for them. He should

not have taken the course he had adopted had he not considered that these men deserved to be treated with justice.

Mr. SHRIMSKI said, if he was rightly informed, there was no objection on the part of the Minister for Public Works to give these men a day's holiday, but that they should not receive that holiday on a day when their services were most required. Whether or not this question was brought forward by the honourable member for the Hutt as a sop to the electors he could not say. He did not see the necessity for giving these men a holiday when the general public were looking forward to enjoying that day, and when the services of the railway employés were most required. He had no doubt that the Minister for Public Works would carry out the promise he had given on a former occasion.

Mr. MACANDREW thought they ought to be cautious and deprecate any interference of the members of that House with the Government action in these matters. They would destroy the whole discipline of the Civil Service if they encouraged such a line of proceeding. He had not the slightest doubt that the Government, in its own interest, would do what was right in the matter. He did not know the terms of the resolution which had been previously passed by the House, but he thought it was unwise and impolitic that they should bring up these questions in the House.

Mr. MOSS agreed with the honourable member for Port Chalmers that it was not wise to interfere between the Government and those in their service. But, if he understood the honourable member for the Hutt rightly, he stated that it was very important, if the holiday was to be given, it should be intimated as soon as possible, so that the employés might have an opportunity of making their arrangements. He should be glad if the Hon. the Minister for Public Works would make known his decision during the day, as it was not merely the railway employés in Wellington who were concerned, but those all over the colony.

Mr. BRYCE said the habit honourable members seemed to have dropped into this session, of moving the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing questions, was a thing which, at any rate, might be over-done. He had no doubt whatever that the honourable member for the Hutt was acting within his strict right, but he questioned very much if he was discreet in pushing that right as he had done. Honourable members were learning this, at all events: that if they had motions upon the Paper that were not likely to come on, they had better put them in the form of questions, and then move the adjournment of the House, so as to have them discussed at the moment. If some honourable members got into the habit of doing that, other honourable members would follow the example. Unles they restrained themselves a little, the rules o the House would have to be altered, or the would come to a block altogether.

Mr. SUTTER objected to the question o

Mr. SUTTER objected to the question orallway employes being continually brough

up in the House. The honourable member for the Hutt was elected by a considerable number of these employes, and he was continually bringing them up on the floor of the House. It was demoralizing to the employes themselves to have these matters brought up continually.

Mr. LEVESTAM said, with regard to the observations made by the honourable member for Waitotara, the motion for adjournment of the House was the only means honourable members had at this period of the session of getting motions discussed. There need not have been any waste of time in regard to this particular matter. A resolution was passed by a large majority affirming the desirability that these men should be paid for any holiday they received, and the Government stated that it was their intention to carry out the resolution. It appeared that the honourable member for the Hutt had been told by the Minister for Public Works that he would not give effect to that resolution.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.-No.

Mr. LEVESTAM .- If that statement was incorrect, there should be an end to this discussion. These men, who were only getting 6s. 6d. a day, were justly entitled to the same State holidays as other Civil servants, who enjoyed all sorts of privileges. The Government, with-out any reason, asked that additional salaries should be paid to highly-paid officials; while they at the same time refused to do fair justice to these men, who were really underpaid. While the 10-per-cent. reduction was restored to the Civil servants the reduction was made to

apply to these men up to the present time.

Mr. FITZEERBERT need not have taken up the time of the House if the Government had extended that courtesy which they should have extended in answering this particular question. He had asked the Minister for Public Works what answer he intended to give with regard to this question, and, from what he understood from him, the question was to be answered in the negative. The honourable member for Oamaru stated that it was because these men were in his (Mr. Fitzherbert's) electorate that he had raised this question. That was what the honourable member im-plied, if he did not say it in so many words. He was not surprised at such a remark coming from the honourable member. If the honourable member would stoop to do such things, he (Mr. Fitzherbert) certainly would not. He should have brought the matter forward whether the people concerned were his constituents or not: in fact, very few of them were. He was not in the habit of using arguments in favour of a bad cause for individuals who happened to be his constituents. He had brought this question forward simply in the cause of justice to these men, who had not a single holiday in the year. He must apologize for taking up the time of the House; but it was not his fault, as he would not have moved the adjournment of the House if the Government had only given him a satisfactory answer.

Motion for adjournment negatived.

### CREOSOTING SLEEPERS.

Mr. JOYCE asked the Minister for Public Works, If he is aware that the duty on creosote and the tanks in which it is imported is equal to 1s. per railway-sleeper creosoted, and whether, in calling for tenders, he will make such arrangements as shall obviate the necessity that would otherwise exist of having recourse to the troublesome and tedious process of rebate or drawback? He was led to put the question by having received, through the intervention of the honourable member for Caversham, a letter from a gentleman in Dunedin who had given considerable attention to this subject. In that letter the following passage occurred :-

" Another difficulty in creosoting sleepers has cropped up, which may easily he settled during the Assembly. I find that 15 per cent. duty is chargeable upon creosote imported, which looks scarcely fair, when jarrah from Western Australia comes in free; and, as I represented before, there should be a treaty of commerce with such places when such free importations are allowed. Rebating or returning the duty to contractors on Government works has been established in the case of importations of cement, iron, &c., when the importation is specially declared upon arrival; otherwise, if imported in the usual way of commerce, even when used for Government works afterwards, a duty is charged. This seems a roundabout way of collecting revenue. I think the importation should be either subject to duty or free of duty; and the present practice may lead to abuses, especially as municipal and county works do not get this advantage.

It appeared that the quantity of creosote which could be obtained from the gasworks in the colony would not be sufficient to carry out the process on the scale needed, and therefore creosote would have to be imported.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that, if creosote were imported for this particular purpose, it would be allowed to come in duty-free.

#### RAILWAYS AUTHORIZATION BILL.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON. - Sir, I have to move the second reading of this Bill, and I will just shortly refer to the various items contained in it which it is proposed to authorize. In the first instance, the Bill proposes to authorize a branch line of railway from the main line of the Whangarei-Kamo Railway to the Whauwhau Colliery. The previous Government entered into an arrangement to construct this line on the condition that the whole of the cost should be paid down to the Government, or that a sufficient guarantee should be given for the payment of the cost. Tenders have been received for the construction of the line; but the work has not been commenced, the necessary funds not having been provided. It is expected that they will soon be, however, and it is therefore necessary that legal authority should be taken for the construction of the line. Clause 5 refers to a proposal practically to bridge the Waikato River at a

place called Huntley. This work was referred | to last night during the discussion on the supplementary estimates. I should state that this matter was brought under my notice by the department almost immediately after I took office; and it came before me in this way: I was asked to authorize the expenditure of a considerable sum of money at Mercer for extending the accommodation for mercer for extending the accommodation for coal traffic there to meet the traffic in coal coming from the mine at Huntley, a place about twenty-eight miles up the river, the coal being brought down to Mercer by the river. Plans had been prepared for this bridge; but I caused inquiries to be made, and I found that the plans could be very much modified, and that the estimated cost of connecting the mine with the railway by means of a bridge over the river would be something like £10,000. Various representations had been made before by persons representing the local bodies; but, up to the time when the general estimates came down, no arrangement had been made which I could recommend to the House for acceptance. After the Public Works Statement had been delivered, however, a proposal was made which seemed to me to get over the difficulty. The people who would be primarily benefited by this work were a private company, and they made a proposal by which they are prepared to enter into any guarantee which the Government may choose to demand that they shall, over a period of years, provide a sufficient quantity of coal for carriage between their mine and Mercer, on the understanding that the railway shall get the carriage of this coal from Mercer to Auckland. Now, the carriage of the quantity of coal which this company have offered to bind themselves to deliver will produce a gross revenue to the railway of close on £3,000 a year, or a net revenue of something like £1,200. The present loss to the railway is that it does not get the carriage of coal from Huntley to Mercer; and not only loses that, but the general goods traffic, which the steamers engaged in carrying this coal down the river, owing to their having no back cargo, are ready to take up for a mere trifle. That is a loss which is increasing from day to day. If this bridge, however, is constructed, the railway will get the major part of the coal traffic from Huntley, and also the goods traffic; and an expenditure of something like £3,000 will be immediately saved. It is only a question of a year or two in any case when this bridge must be constructed. These are the whole circumstances of the case; and that is why this clause has been inserted in the Bill, and an amount brought down on the estimates to enable the Government to construct the bridge.

Mr. SEDDON.—Will the honourable member lay the guarantee on the table of the

House?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—There is no objection to doing that during next session, and I do not suppose the contract will be completed before then. The next clause—the 6th—has originated in this way: Proposals have been

made by a private company to construct a line from a coal mine at Kaitangata to the main line, under the Railways Construction and Land Act; but the Government have not seen their way to give land in terms of that Act, and an arrangement such as that referred to in this clause has been suggested, and this provision is inserted to enable the proprietors of this mine, if they are really in earnest, to get their branch line constructed. Clause 8 enables a branch line already made, from Wairio to the Township of Nightcaps, to be legally worked by the Government. There are two other proposals in the Bill. One is to extend the railwayline from New Plymouth to the breakwater at It is considered advisable to take power to construct the line and acquire the land necessary for its construction before the land in the neighbourhood becomes too valuable. The other is a formal authorization of the construction of the Northern Trunk Railway-line, the route being specified as particularly as it is considered wise to specify it at present. These are the main provisions of the Bill, of which I now move the second reading.

Mr. MOSS.—I should like to ask the Minister for Public Works, with reference to the fourth item in the schedule—the North Island Main Trunk Railway—which, it is stated, is to start from a point at or near Marton to Te Awamutu viá Murimotu, Taumarunui, and the Ongarahu Valley—whether, if the Bill is passed in that way, it will compel the Government to begin the line at the Marton end, because to my mind it is quite clear that the Te Awamutu end is the more desirable end to begin at. The railway now runs to Te Awamutu, and to extend it from that point seems desirable. I do not. wish to express any positive opinion upon the matter, and of course the Minister for Public Works will be guided by the inquiries which he may make in future. At the same time, this schedule, as printed, seems to prevent the exercise of his free judgment, and compels the Government to commence the line at Marton.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—I take it that this is the ordinary form of authorizing the construction of a railway, and that the Government will be justified under this clause in beginning the line at whatever point they think fit

Dr. NEWMAN.—As this point has come up, I should like to ask the Minister for Public Works if he is able to state whether this line will come down the banks of the Wangaehu, or down the banks of the Rangitikei River, or to Marton direct. There is a considerable difference between these three routes, and I don't know that anything has yet been settled.

not know that anything has yet been settled.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—With regard to the line coming down the banks of the Wangaehu, I may say almost positively that there is no chance of that. That line would be a very unsuitable one. So far as I am aware, it is very probable that the line will be carried into-Marton direct.

Mr. LARNACH.—Can the Minister tell us what is the nature of the guarantee that is required with regard to this Waikato-Huntley

line? What is the guarantee that the Government intend to ask from the company?

Railways

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—The guarantee will have to be such as will satisfy the Solicitor-General or the Attorney-General that the Government are absolutely safe from any loss.

Mr. LARNACH.—But what are the terms of

the guarantee?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—The matter has not yet been considered by the Government. The company are prepared to give such a gua-

rantee as the Government may insist upon.
Mr. WILSON.—I should like to ask the Minister for Public Works whether there is any necessity for including in the schedule the extension of the line from New Plymouth down to the breakwater. A couple of years ago the Harbour Board themselves were prepared to carry out this work, but now it seems that it is proposed as one of the public works of the colony.

Mr. ROLLESTON. - And I should like to ask the Minister whether he has had his attention drawn to the fact that there is a valuable piece of land about there belonging to the colony, which, now that it is determined that a prison shall not be erected there, should revert to the colony and be available to be dealt

with.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—The matter has not been officially brought before me; but, now the honourable gentleman mentions it, I recollect that there is a piece of land there. I will look into the matter. With regard to the other question, I may say that it has been strongly urged by officers of the department that it would be exceedingly inconvenient that this short line, which must be made—I do not mean to say that it will be made directly—should not be made as part of the Government lines, but be allowed to pass into the hands of any other body.

Mr. FULTON. - With reference to this Huntley line, I would point out that not only does it open up a coal mine which is the property of a private company, but it also opens a large block of land which is the property of a private company; and I should like to ask the Minister whether, as this bridge will give convenient access to this property, he does not think that that company should make some contribution to the cost of the bridge. They will derive great benefit from the bridge, for there is no other means of communication between one side of the river and the other for a long distance down, and this bridge is to be used as a traffic bridge as well as a railway bridge.

Mr. HAMLIN.—There is one omission from the Bill which I am sorry to see, inasmuch as correspondence which has passed between my-self and the Minister for Public Works led me to suppose that a line that is not in the schedule would be there. I allude to the Mauku to Waiuku (West Coast) Railway. I can speak upon the subject with considerable authority, and I say there is no other railway which could be made by the Government which would pay so handsomely as that, while other railways are

being constructed which are not paying as well as they should do. A promise was certainly made, when a flying survey was completed twelve or eighteen months ago, that this line should be included among any other railways authorized to be constructed. But this line is not in the Bill. It was a railway reported upon by a Commission that went round for the purpose some years ago; and I certainly wish to know why it is this railway has been left out, while others which have never been reported on by a Commission, and which the country never expected to be made, have been placed in the schedule.

Mr. BROWN.-I am pleased that the Government propose to extend the main line to the New Plymouth Harbour works. I think it would be very inconvenient to have dual control over such a small line. I look upon it

as a line that will pay very well.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—With reference to the remarks of the honourable member for the Taieri, I have stated that it was proposed to make this bridge a traffic bridge as well as a railway bridge, for the special reason that for eighty miles along that river there is no means of crossing except by canoe or punt. Although there is a block of private land there—which has been a bar to bridging the river for some years past—the Crown has also got a very large block of land, a great deal of which is fit for settlement and is being surveyed, and this bridge will supply it with easy means of commu-nication. With regard to the remarks of the honourable member for Franklin South, that railway had been before the Public Works Department for some time, and had been partly surveyed by them twelve months ago. But it was thought that, if it were put into this schedule, it might raise the hopes of the people in the district that it would be constructed at an early date, while at the same time I cannot hold out hopes that it will be so.

Bill read a second time.

### IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 4 .- Cost of branch line to Whauwhau Colliery to be first paid to the colony, or bank guarantee for cost lodged with Colonial Treasurer.

Mr. LARNACH moved, That progress be reported.

The Committee divided.

AYES, 6.

Allwright Tellers. Hursthouse Larnach O'Conor Smith. Turnbull.

Nozs, 58.

Ballance Dargaville Hobbs Barron Dodson Holmes Beetham Fitzherbert Joyce Bevan Fraser Lake Fulton B.-Bradshaw Tance Brown Garrick Levestam Gillies Locke Bruce Macandrew Guinness Bryce Conolly Harper Macarthur Hirst, H. McKenzie, J. Cowan

THOUSE.1

Menteath Russell Trimble Seddon Vogel Wakefield Newman Shephard Steward, W. J. Walker Peacock White, W. Pearson Stout Pere Sutter Wilson. Richardson, E. Taiaroa Richardson, G. Thompson, T. Tellers. Thomson, J. W. Duncan Rolleston Tole Ross Moat. Majority against, 52.

Motion negatived.

Clause 5.—Branch line across Waikato at Huntley authorized under certain conditions. Mr. SMITH moved, That the clause be struck out.

The Committee divided.

	AYES, 49.	
Atkinson	Hursthouse	Russell
Ballance	Joyce	Shephard
Beetham	Lake	Steward, W.
Bevan	Lance	Stewart, W. I
Brown	Levestam	Stout
Bruce	Locke	Sutter
Bryce	McKenzie, J.	Taiaroa
Conolly	Menteath	Thompson, T
Cowan	Moat	Tole
Dargaville	Moss	Trimble
Duncan	Pearson	Vogel
Fulton	Pere	Walker
Garrick	Pyke	Wilson.
Gillies	Richardson, E.	
Guinness	Richardson, G.	Tellers.
Hirst, H.	Rolleston	Fitzherbert
Hobbs	Ross	Peacock.
	Nors, 8.	
Allwright	O'Conor	Tellers.
Barron	Thomson, J. W	Shrimski
Larnach	Turnbull.	Smith.
	Majority against.	41.

Amendment negatived. Bill reported, and read a third time.

TRADE WITH INDIA.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I have some information to give to the House which I think will interest honourable members very much. It may be remembered that some time ago, in reply to a question put by the honourable member for Waimate with regard to the Government taking steps to ascertain whether a trade could be promoted between this colony and India, I said that the Government had already instituted inquiries. The inquiries were contained in a telegram which had been sent to Sir James Fergusson, Governor of Bombay, who, we know, has always taken the liveliest interest in New Zealand, and has always desired to serve it since the termination of his Governorship here. The telegram sent to Sir James Fergusson was as follows: "Is there any prospect of New Zealand frozen mutton and fine woollen fabrics Zealand market in India? Your reply to New Zealand will greatly oblige." To-day I received a reply as follows: "Mutton experiment feasible; but more hopeful at Calcutta. If desired, would suggest local agent to arrange.

European daily consumption mutton, Bombay, two hundred sheep. Natives, except Parsees, eat only fresh-killed." Although the consumption in Bombay is not very large, it must be borne in mind that, if meat is more freely available, the consumption may largely increase, and I am informed, on good authority, that in Calcutta there is a consumption of at least five times as much. The matter seems to be one of sufficient importance to be further inquired into. I have placed myself in communication on the subject with the honourable member for Cheviot, who moved for a Select Committee to inquire, in connection with a similar Committee of the Legislative Council, into the sheep and rabbit question; and the honourable member for Cheviot (Mr. Lance) has agreed to endeavour to convene a meeting next week, in Christchurch, of those interested in the frozen-meat industry, with a view of considering whether the matter is of sufficient importance to warrant the despatch of an experienced agent to India to see if arrangements could be made for sending regular shipments of frozen meat-to India. I have told the honourable gentleman, on behalf of the Government, that, if it is decided by those interested in the industry that it is desirable to send such an agent. Home, the Government would favourably consider the question of bearing a portion of the expense. It is stated in the report before alluded to that, out of the Sheep Fund proper, there is a considerable surplus left for expenditure, and I think it would be legitimate to use a part of this fund on a purpose which promises to promote the interests of those who pay the taxation, and are so greatly concerned in the frozen-meat industry. The matter is one of considerable importance, and I am sure honourable members will feel gratified to know that Sir James Fergusson continues to take so warm an interest in the colony.

COLLINGWOOD COAL FIELDS. On the motion for going into Committee of

Supply,
Mr. HURSTHOUSE said,—Sir, as I am suffering from what I consider, rightly or wrongly, to be the great injustice which the part of the country I represent is sustaining at the hands of the Government, I wish to move a resolution, to which I hope the Government will accede. The policy which has been enunciated by the present Government in reference to the development of the local industries of New Zealand, more especially the coal industry, is so well known to this House that it does not devolve upon me at present to say anything in reference to it, excepting that very large concessions have been given to the collieries at Westport and Greymouth, with the object of developing the coal industries in those localities, and there is a deep sense of injustice felt by the people I represent that their applications for assistance in developing the coal industries of that part of the country have been received with a deaf ear. I, in conjunction with other members from the Nelson District, waited on

the Government in the early part of the session, and brought before them certain matters in connection with the coal industry in the Collingwood District. We were led to believe, by the Minister of Mines and the Minister for Public Works, that they would take this matter into Subsequently, I asked the consideration. Minister of Mines whether he would place on the estimates a sufficient sum to construct a tramway to connect those coal fields with deep water in the harbour. He informed me that, the coal mines being private property, the colony would not be justified in spending any sum of money in assisting them. I have no reason to believe that the honourable gentleman would wilfully make a misstatement, but I may say that these particular coal fields are in exactly the same position as the coal fields on the West Coast: that is to say, they are Crown property, leased from the Crown to certain coal companies and individuals, and are subject to rents and royalties to exactly the same extent as the coal fields on the West Coast. I fail to see why assistance should not be given to all alike. will not detain the House by going into the peculiar advantages of the trade in this particular locality further than to say I have reason to believe that the coal deposits at Collingwood are equal in quality to any in New Zealand. It is true the seams are not so large as those on the West Coast; but still the coal has been tried, both theoretically and practically, and has proved to be excellent in quality for all purposes. It has been tried by the Locomotive Department and by the Union Steamship Company, and has given ample satisfaction; and the only reason why these coal fields cannot be further developed is the want of communication with a port where larger vessels can enter. I would point out to the Government that, by the expenditure of a sum not exceeding £5,000, the revenue derived from the royalty payable under the lease would increase from about £100 a year to £1,000; so that it would really be a paying speculation for the colony, as there would be an increase in the revenue of something like 900 per cent., and this trade would increase largely as the coal deposits are developed. I move the following resolution: That, with the object of developing the coal industry of Collingwood, the Government will, during the recess, cause inquiry to be made by some competent officer as to the desirability of connecting the coal fields in that district with deep water, and report to this House early next session.

Supply.

Motion agreed to.

SUPPLY. IN COMMITTEE.

PUBLIC WORKS FUND.

CLASS III.—RAILWAYS. New works—Construction and land—Branch line of railway from the Kaipara—Waikato main line across the Waikato River at Huntley, £10,000, agreed to.

CLASS IV.—SURVEYS, NEW LINES. Compensation to C. W. Hursthouse and W. Mr. Hursthouse

Newsham for detention by Maoris, £200, agreed

CLASS V.-ROADS.

Roads to open lands before sale, £13,520, agreed to.

Roads on gold fields, £7,000, agreed to.

CLASS VI.—WATERWORKS ON GOLD FIELDS. Water-races (Middle Island), £3,000, agreed

CLASS VIII .- TELEGRAPH EXTENSION. New lines, £2,030, agreed to.

CLASS IX.—Public Buildings.

Judicial, £960.
Mr. ALLWRIGHT called attention to the item of £700 for a courthouse at Port Chalmers. When he applied to the Minister of Justice for a vote for a courthouse at Lyttelton, which was very much needed, the Minister told him that he had no money to place on the esti-mates for courthouses. The honourable member for Port Chalmers seemed to have been more successful than he was in interviewing the Minister.

Mr. TOLE said the honourable member was scarcely justified in making the last observation, because it was his (Mr. Tole's) object to do justice to all honourable gentlemen alike. He believed there was a necessity for a courthouse at Lyttelton. A site had been obtained, and he was making inquiries; but they were not sufficiently mature to justify him in placing a sum on the estimates at present.

Vote, £960, agreed to.

Lunatic asylums, £2,000, agreed to. Charitable institutions, £5,000, agreed to.

CLASS X.-LIGHTHOUSES AND HARBOUR Works.

Harbour works, Greymouth, £1,500, agreed to.

UNAUTHORIZED EXPENDITURE. Consolidated Fund, £60,972 13s. 4d., agreed

Public Works Fund, £31,741 17s. 10d., agreed

Government Insurance Account, £608 17s. 6d., agreed to.

> PUBLIC WORKS FUND. CLASS I .- IMMIGRATION.

Immigration, £100,000.

Mr. MACANDREW asked whether, in the event of the Imperial Government being unable to assist the crofters to New Zealand, a small modicum of this amount would be available in that direction.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that the item £96,297 would meet what the honourable mem-

ber desired.

Mr. BRUCE said it appeared to him that, in reference to this subject—the Highland crofters -there were mainly two questions to consider. In the first place, what were the antecedents of those people whom it was proposed to introduce? And, secondly, would their introduc-tion and settlement in the manner proposed be likely to be attended with advantage to this

Supply.

colony? It was hardly necessary for him to say that it had been fashionable of late years to traduce the Celtic race—the race to which these unfortunate people belonged — whilst they themselves had been specially singled out as the targets of abuse. He would not presume to attempt to inflict anything like a historical troatise in reference to these people upon the House; but, in order to endeavour to remove misconception, which he had reason to believe existed in the minds of some honourable members, he should like to make a few remarks. In times long gone by the Highland clans held their land by a tenure somewhat similar to that of the Maoris of the present day. At a comparatively recent period the chiefs, the descendants of those men originally selected to lead the people in war and conduct their councils in peace, were sufficiently cunning and unscrupulous—he used the words advisedly—without the knowledge or consent of their clans, to obtain Crown titles for the land occupied by the people. What use their descendants had made of the power thus obtained was now a matter of history. Vast districts had been depopulated to make room for sheep, and ultitimately for deer; and to-day the unfortunate remnant of a gallant race were standing at bay on the sea-shores of their native country. These crofters had been denounced as lazy and dirty, shiftless and impracticable; in fact, spoken of as nuisances of whom the country would be well rid. Granting the truth of these allegations — and to a certain extent he admitted their truth—what, in this world of cause and effect, was the cause of this unhappy state of things? The people had been shovelled out of their native glens, from land to which their title was morally at least as good as that of those who dispossessed them, and to-day they were hardly allowed room for their miserable habitations above high-water mark. Under such conditions could we look for energy and thrift? Could we expect expansion where no room for it existed? Reading between the lines of the evidence given before the Royal Commission recently appointed to inquire into the condition of these unfortunate people, he could trace a story of oppression, want, and misery—of the spirit almost crushed out of one of the most martial races that the world has ever seen. It was a well-known fact that the descendants of the dispossessed kinsmen of these people formed to-day the backbone of the population of British North America, and he felt sure that the House would agree with him when he said that those Highlanders who had made Australasia their home would not be found unworthy competitors in the work of colonization of their Saxon fellow-settlers. It had been said that these people had no claim upon us in this colony; but he believed that wherever our oppressed or suffering fellowcreatures were found they had a claim on us commensurate with our ability to assist them. It had been insinuated that those who wished to introduce the crofters to this colony had no sympathy with their oppressed Irish fellow-subjects. Speaking for himself and, he knew,

Supply.

for those who were acting with him in this matter, he would repudiate the insinuation. He believed that the chronic rebellion and avowed hostility of a large majority of the Irish people—for there was no denying it—was the logical product of centuries of oppression and persecution, coupled with iniquitous land laws, which perhaps still remained. It had been said that we should extend our sympathy to the persecuted Jews of the Continent. He regretted that, if merely as a protest against a barbarism rarely equalled, Australasia had not offered an asylum to a portion of that noble Semitic race, to whom we owed so much, and whose persecutions on the Continent of Europe of late years would form a dark stain on the page of the history of this century. But these Highlanders had a very special claim upon us -upon all who love and cherish that liberty which we to-day enjoy. Nations, like individuals, were too apt to forget great services rendered. It was this race who, in the early part of this century, when the destinies of the world were trembling in the balance, produced those Celtic phalanxes whose names were synonymous with victory-troops worthy to fall into line with the soldiers who fought at Marathon and Thermopylæ. Within the last few days honourable members had the pleasure of listening to a noble chief of the Maori race pleading eloquently the cause of his people at the bar of the House, fearful lest any measures might be passed which might have the effect of alienating their lands. On that very day he (Mr. Bruce) picked up in the lobby a Southern newspaper which told that the chiefs of another race — or, to speak more correctly, the landlords—were about to evict their kinsmen with the aid of troops. And this was in Skye, an island which, in the early part of this century, furnished ten thousand gallant soldiers to fight for a power which to-day permits the expulsion of her people at the point of the bayonet. With that eloquence so peculiarly his own the honourable member for Auckland East had pointed out that this colony must trust for her defences rather to a hardy maritime population than to heavy armaments and big guns. He (Mr. Bruce) entirely agreed with that honourable member. The improvements in scientific naval warfare pointed entirely in that direction. The best seamen in the merchant service of Britain were drawn from the fishing population on her coasts, and in all maritime countries the merchant navy had been looked upon as the backbone of the fighting navy. Still more would this obtain in the future. The settlement of those people in the manner proposed had been objected to on economic grounds. It had been alleged that we should be acting unwisely in giving away our lands. He (Mr. Bruce) believed they could not be put to a better use. Those who advanced this theory appeared to forget one of the very first axioms of political economy, that the greatest wealth of a nation was its men. It had been said that these crofters could not make a living on ten acres of land. He (Mr. Bruce) believed that a residence

of some years in this country seemed to have the effect of causing many people to hold most exaggerated ideas in reference to the quantity of land necessary to make a comfortable livelihood. If these people could exist under their present conditions, they could certainly make a comfortable living under those proposed to offer them here, and particularly when it was remembered that they would have at their doors the rich harvest of the sea, with a market for their fish at Dunedin, a city rapidly becoming one of the most wealthy, populous, and important centres in the Southern Hemisphere. He would not occupy the time of the House further than to say that this measure—this philanthropic, statesmanlike measure—was one worthy of the source from which it emanated; and he hoped that, if merely as a protest against the inhumanity with which our kinsmen were being treated, they would be offered an asylum in this colony.

Vote, £100,000, agreed to.

### PUBLIC WORKS.

On the motion for going into Committee of

Major ATKINSON said,—Sir, before you leave the chair, I desire to make a few remarks upon the Public Works Statement. I very much regret, at this late period of the session, to take up the time of the House; but there are so many curious statements in this document which the Minister for Public Works laid before us, and such blame cast upon the late Government-quite needlessly for the objects which the honourable gentleman had in view—that I feel myself called upon to say a few words upon the subject. It strikes me that the Govern-ment in general, and the Minister for Public Works and the Colonial Treasurer in particular, must have had a great deal of quiet enjoyment out of this Statement. They must have been laughing in their sleeves at the way in which the Statement has been received by a large number of honourable members, and by a considerable section of the Press throughout the colony. There is no doubt that it has created an impression that those honourable gentlemen are going to proceed with the works of the colony upon entirely new lines, and with very much greater vigour than they were pursued by the late Government. But I venture to think that I shall show, before I sit down, that there is no reason at all for supposing that, and that the only way in which the honourable gentlemen differ from us is in a direction which is not approved by this House, and which is entirely against all the declarations of those honourable gentlemen. I do not propose to follow the Statement throughout, but I should like, in the first place, to refer to the question of the Three-Million Loan. The honourable gentleman, at page 13, has an argument to show that the Three-Million Loan has been anticipated to a very large extent, that it was in-tended to last out another year, and that, therefore, the late Government have been very much to blame in dealing with this loan. But there are no grounds at all for such an asser-

tion; nor is there, on the other hand, any ground for saying—as the honourable gentleman does-that the other alternative was to happen: that the money was being spent be-fore it was borrowed. Now, it will be in the recollection of the House that we were under engagement in 1882 not to place any loan upon the market before the following January. Yet the House determined that it was necessary to borrow money as quickly as possible during that year; and they appropriated for that year's expenditure something like a million out of the Three-Million Loan, the first million of which was to be raised in the following January. Yet, Sir, the honourable gentlemen, having these facts before them, knowing that the House voted the money and directed the Government to spend it, told us that it was quite clear it was not intended to spend it that year, or it would have been borrowed the year before. Sir, it was intended for expenditure that year, and was meant to date from March, 1882, or the House was stultifying itself by authorizing the expenditure of the money during that year. There was no expending the money before it was borrowed, because there was a balance in hand which was quite sufficient to carry us on—just as the honourable gentleman proposes to carry on the north trunk line with money in hand. There was enough in hand to carry us on until the loan was raised in the following January. It is important the House should understand that; and I ask any honourable members who have a doubt on the subject to turn up the appropriations of that year, and they will see the matter in as perfectly clear a light as I have put it. Of course, the only object of putting this paragraph in, apparently, had nothing to do with the Statement. Their only object was to have a sneer at the late Government. The honourable gentleman says, "Look what this late Government did. They have actually, as a matter of fact, spent the whole or mortgaged the whole of this Three-Million Loan in the year 1884; the whole of it is mortgaged for liabilities incurred upon it, except for a small balance of some £327,000. This is all," says the honourable gentleman, "we have left for new works." The honourable gentleman knew as well as I that there is no money left there for new works at all. He knows perfectly well that that loan was appropriated before it was borrowed. A schedule was passed, and the House directed at what rate liabilities were to be incurred. And these liabilities were all incurred under the authority of the House, and this £327,000 is not available for new works for this year. Then, Sir, the honourable gentle-man goes on—and it is quite evident here that it is not the writing of the Minister for Public Works—here the Colonial Treasurer comes in, and he goes on to say, in another paragraph, "In order to make this complicated subject quite clear, I will explain it a little further;" and then he proceeds to throw still more dust and darkness over the whole subject. The subject wanted no explanation except a plain, satisfactory statement, with one object-to let this

Mr. Bruce

House and the country understand what was the real position. But the honourable gentlemen had other objects in view. They desired to cast reflections on the late Government, and to show what very fine fellows they were in comparison. I shall show presently that, whatever was bad in the policy of the late Government, it is a matter for great congratulation that those honourable gentlemen are following exactly the same lines. The truth is that, instead of there only being £327,000, there was, according to the honourable gentleman himself, £564,000; for he says, "True, the late Government may say £236,000 has also been spent during the current year, and ought to be included as available last March: that leaves \$564,000." But, then, there is a further item -which the honourable gentlemen seem to have forgotten altogether, although taking great credit for foresight. They forget altogether that there was provided out of those liabilities stock and rails to the amount of £300,000, and that that was provided for them or any Government that might be in power to make lines with during the current year. The honourable gentlemen say nothing about that. Practically, for what the honourable gentlemen term new works there was really £564,000 in cash, and £300,000 in materials to be used on the lines during the current year. That was the position, and the honourable gentlemen could have stated it in a few words, if that had been their object. I submit that, if the honourable gentlemen had had that object in view, it would have been better for the country generally, and might have saved debate this evening; but, with the shocking example of us before them, an example to be avoided, an example so bad in the eyes of the honourable gentlemen, apparently, that they must devote a very large portion of this Statement to point out our de-linquencies, and with a loan which has not been scheduled, about which no provision has been made at all or direction given by the House, just about the same amount will be left free at the end of next March, after borrowing a million and a half, as we had at the end of two years. If honourable members will now look at the bottom of page 13, they will find that those honourable gentlemen, after adding together all their available means, announce this—and I do not dispute it: that the amount available is £3,877,000. Then, the honourable gentlemen ask for a vote during the coming year of no less than £2,810,000. I am speaking in round numbers. So that next March there will be left free, supposing the honourable gentlemen push on with the vigour they say they will, the sum of £567,000, as against £564,000 which was free, according to the honourable gentlemen, on the 31st March last. So that they have not profited by the very bad example they saw so plainly in us. It is quite true that one man may steal a horse, and another may not look over the fence. And I should like here to say a few words

on several occasions that the Governmentlooking at the state of the country, looking at the requirements of this year, the benefits of which the honourable gentlemen are going to reap—took upon themselves to expend a considerable sum in providing rails and rolling-stock for the current year, thereby exceeding authority in the year's expenditure. It has been commonly supposed—and I should rather put it so myself—that that might be charged to the unlooked-for and large expenditure on open lines. A large amount of that might have been charged against the votes, and might never be charged against construction and land, as was being done up to that time since the beginning of the public works policy. I wish to put that, because it would appear very differently had we not desired to separate the votes for construction and land from permanentway and rolling-stock and expenditure on open lines. It was with that object that I made the distinction I did in the Financial Statement which I had the honour of delivering about the middle of last session. But I want it to be distinctly understood that the amount might have been charged, if we had so chosen, against the votes, and that, in so charging it, it would have been in accordance with the usage of the Public Works Department from the beginning; and, instead of having to ask for a fresh vote for works upon the open lines, it might have appeared as so much more upon the appropriation schedule of the loan-what the honourable gentlemen are doing now with the further appropriations this year. So much, then, for the position of the loan. And now I come to the question of where the honourable gentlemen differ from the late Government in what they propose to do. But here I might remark that I was very much astonished at the assertion made by the honourable gentleman in the opening part of his Statement; and I feel it due to the officers of the department themselves to refer to it, because it is possible he might have made it in quite a different sense from that understood by the public generally. The honourable gentleman says,-

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"The time that has elapsed since the Government took office has not been sufficient to enable me to make myself thoroughly acquainted with the proceedings of the various branches of the Public Works Department, and I have had to depend in a great measure upon the figures and reports submitted to me by the several official heads of the depart-

Well, I confess that the only meaning I can attach to that is that the honourable gentleman wants us to believe that he is personally responsible for, and can personally check and examine, the whole of the reports of district and other officers, and all the figures in his department. Of course such an interpretation as that is simply preposterous; but the honourable gentleman apparently wishes to guard himself against giving the figures of his perabout the question of the over-expenditure, as it was called, of last year—that liability incurred by the late Government. I pointed out man is going to do that, we shall want another Minister for Public Works at once, because it is quite certain he will not be able to discharge the duties of his office if he attempts it. venture to say that any amount of checking of the ordinary figures of the Public Works Department is worse than useless in the position of the Hon. the Minister for Public Works. Then, the honourable gentleman, speaking of the additions to opened lines, says,

"And here I would wish to record my opinion that a very large amount of the works executed on these opened lines has been done much earlier than there was any real necessity for, and also that the unnecessarily-increased accommodation given in some instances is causing very great pressure to be put upon the Government for similarly unnecessary expenditure in other

The honourable gentleman greatly regrets that there has been such expenditure upon opened lines-that they have been rendered as efficient as the honourable member confesses they have been. A little further on, in the last paragraph relating to opened lines, he says,

"By reason of these and many similar additions made to the opened railways during the past few years, we have now got 1,404 miles of railway complete, and equipped—not of a description such as was proposed in 1870, when the scheme of public works was inaugurated by my colleague, Sir Julius Vogel, but lines of a much higher class, and of such a nature that much higher speeds can be run, and much greater traffic than was then anticipated can be carried."

Well, apparently that is a matter for very great regret on the part of the honourable mem-ber. Two lines further down, the honourable gentleman tells us that he is impressed with the opinion that the condition and management of our railways are in a most satisfactory state. I will ask the honourable gentleman, when he replies, to tell us what he means by the condition of the railways, because I understand that the condition of the lines is a source of regret to the honourable gentle-man; and yet he says that they are fully equipped and complete in every respect, and that they will give us much greater speed and conveniences than we have at the present time. Now, when we turn to the estimates we find this extraordinary fact: that, while the honourable gentleman greatly regrets that we have lines running at such speed and affording such convenience to the public, he actually proposes -after providing for a large liability outstanding now—he actually proposes to vote this year £176,000 for works on these very lines which, according to the honourable gentleman, are complete, fully equipped, and a great deal be-fore their time. I say there is here a departure from the action of the late Government. We made a larger expenditure, I confess, than I liked; but the late Government, looking at the conveniences that the public demanded, and which they thought the traffic justified, I say were unable to incur a less expenditure. The honourable gentleman, while blaming us for

efficient lines, asks us to vote £176,000 for expenditure during the last six months of this year, although we have liabilities outstanding of over £300,000. I dare say this will be found to be susceptible of explanation, but I confess I felt a little surprised at the statement of the honourable gentleman. I do not know whether the honourable gentleman had time to correct these figures, or whether these are the figures in his department, but they also appear to me to want a little explanation. On page 14 of the Statement the honourable gentleman says,

"For railways we ask for a vote of £1,567,516. On this sum we have to charge £903,898 for existing liabilities, and it also includes £522,584 for additions to opened lines; but, of this sum of £522,584, there are existing liabilities of

£345,295."
I wish to call attention to this part, as it conflicts with this vote entirely. It must have been a slip, but it is a very curious slip to make, because it is a mistake in the words, not merely in the figures. He continues,

"We have also to pay, out of this vote, for rails for renewals on working railways, the sum of £100,000, and there are existing liabilities under this head of £48,868. The £100,000 has, however, to be repaid to the Public Works

Fund by the working railways."

If honourable gentlemen will turn to the estimates, and to the table at the end of the Statement, they will find that the £100,000 is not included in the £522,000, but is extra and outside it altogether. This £522,000 the honourable gentleman is asking for for expenditure on working lines that are already fully equippedwhich are so satisfactory that they will carry us with much greater speed than we ought to be carried, and give us much greater conveniences than we ought to enjoy, at the present time. shall be much obliged to the honourable gentleman if he will explain to us the reason for that vote. The statement I have made is borne out by reference to the public works estimates and the table attached to the Public Works Statement—namely, that the £522,000 includes the votes for expenditure upon lines, and which are to be repaid by the open lines — by the working railways. I should like to call the attention of the House to the vigour with which the work is to be carried on. That is a very important question, because I know honourable gentlemen are building a great deal on that, and the country is building on it. The honourable gentlemen say that the country has been "dozing," and they must wake it up, and are going to push on these lines at some very great acceleration of speed. But what do we find? How are the honourable gentlemen going to do it? If they are going to do it they must have money to do it. I do not know any other way. Of course we know the fertile invention of the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, and he may have some means which he has not yet disclosed to the House; but, judging by the estimates, honourable members will see that it is utterly impossible for the Government to carry on the this, and while regretting that we have such works at a greater rate than they were carried



on by the late Government. I ask honourable members to turn to page 4 of the public works estimates, and there they will find the provision the Government proposes to make. It is necessary to understand that this is a provision for two years, from last March up to March, 1886. The honourable gentleman tells us that the million and a half loan he proposes to borrow is to carry us on through next year, from March, 1885, to March, 1886, besides the balance of the current year. Now, what do the honourable gentlemen ask us to vote? They ask us to vote this year over £780,000 for construction and land, as against £701,000 which the late Government proposed to vote. Of that £701,000, the honourable gentleman will no doubt see that a certain amount was expended upon the open lines, and if honourable gentlemen turn to page 5 they will find there the amount that was expended, apparently, out of this vote, amounting, in round numbers, to a sum of £30,000. The present Government are asking for the expenditure of £110,000 more than the late Government asked, and that amount is practically for three lines of railway — the Hamilton— Thames line, the North Island Main Trunk line, and the Otago Central. Honourable members who are following this question will know that when these votes are taken there will be only a little over £400,000 free. Now, out of that sum we shall have to provide for all the necessary public buildings, and for roads and bridges. We shall have to provide for a large expanditure upon open lines, because it is altogether a mistake to suppose that we are going to escape further expenditure. The honourable gentleman cannot hope to have £200,000 a year to expend upon open lines out of the \$400,000. He cannot hope to have more than £200,000 to expend next year upon railways. The total amount the honourable gentleman proposes to expend upon railways and those other reproductive works with which the honourable gentleman is going to restore confidence to the country—the total amount he will have to expend in the two years—is only about £800,000. I ask the House to think for a moment what that means. A large portion of that will run over to the year following; it cannot be expended in the time. What hope is there of the realization of this very favourable account the honourable gentleman gives us of what he is going to do? The honourable gentlemen are devoting a much larger portion of this loan than has been usual to outside works. That is the fact. They are devoting the money to other works than reproductive; and how the honourable gentlemen are going to do out of £800,000 what they have assured this House they will do, I confess I am at a loss to understand. Perhaps the honourable gentlements of the confess I am at a loss to understand. men will tell us. Then, the honourable gentlemen have, if I may use the expression, broken out again on this question of roads. There are several roads here, and I do not know on what principle they have chosen them. There is, for example, the Kaikoura Road on which they are going to spend £25,000. I do not know the

history of that road, and I think the House might fairly ask for some information respecting it. There are also several other roads and bridges for which I confess I can see no justification. I can understand the maintenance of the Roads and Bridges Construction Act—that is reasonable, and I could understand its being used to a very much larger extent than it is, for it proceeds on the principle that we shall help those who help themselves; but I cannot see any reason for the special votes which are begun again this year. I think the honourable gentleman is bound to give us some reason why he has departed from the well-established principle of not voting special sums for particular works.

Mr. HOLMES.—What are they?

Major ATKINSON.—I have referred to the Kaikoura Road, and I do not want to detain the House by going, through the list; but if honourable gentlemen will look at the Statement they will see them for themselves. Now, I very much approve of the division of the estimates which the honourable gentleman has made. I think it is very wise that we should have lands and construction shown, open lines shown, and permanent-way shown; but I think he might have recognized the fact that his predecessors had determined to adopt the same course. Mr. Walter Johnston told the House, in his Public Works Statement last year, that it would be done this year: and I myself called special attention to it last I think the honourable gentleman, session. instead of making such a flourish of trumpets over what he had done himself, might have said that the late Government had seen the necessity for it, and had openly spoken of it in the House some twelve months ago. Then, on page 11, he tells us the grounds on which they are acting. He says that immigration must be steady, that our public works must not proceed by fits and starts, that it is a work not only for this generation but for the next and for the next after that; and then he proceeds upon exactly the same lines—not word for word, but exactly the same lines—as the last Government. He adopts the same arguments to show how much he can borrow, and he dishes all this up as if it were something new, and as if he had made a grand discovery. He tells us that he thinks—although he does not give us the grounds for saying so-that, instead of borrowing a million, as the late Government proposed to do, they could safely borrow from a million to a million and a half. and he arrives at his conclusion exactly in the same way as the late Government arrived at theirs. He looked at it, he says, in this way: What surplus revenue have we? And the honourable gentleman says—and of course it is the Treasurer who speaks—"We can safely calculate upon having, from ordinary revenue, £50,000; by consolidation we can save £20,000." And he hopes also, by the increase in the railways, to get £25,000: making, in all, £95,000. And then he goes on to tell us that now the million and a half will cost £60,000 at 4 per cent., but he hopes in a year or two to borrow

We are certainly discounting the future very fast; we are taking the Sinking Fund, and, as we know very well, "Easy come, easy go," and if we get these large sums we shall only go on borrowing more and more. The honourable gentleman tells us, "I shall get a million and a half for £60,000;" and then he suddenly pulls himself up and says, "Some honourable gentleman may perhaps say that I have forgotten the remaining million of the Three-Million Loan; but it is not forgotten, and I do not bring it into account because temporary expedients to raise money during the current year have necessitated a very large expenditure on interest, which will cover the expenditure on the interest on the last million; so that it is all right." I confess I fail to follow him in this, and I hope that he will explain it in his reply. The late Government borrowed, but we had no temporary expedients to get advances on the Three, Million Loan, except the deficiency bills which were authorized at the end of last session of Parliament. I say we had no temporary expedient except that; and what those honourable gentlemen have done is to draw against it to the extent of £400,000. Whether they will want all that, I do not know; but that is anti-cipating only to the extent of £500,000. Now, the interest on the £500,000 will be at 6 per cent., and we know that the interest on the £400,000 is to be 5 per cent. So that you have the interest on the £400,000 for three months, and the interest on the £500,000 at o per cent. for six months. How he is going to turn that into £60,000 I do not know. It will not be more than £10,000; so that he is wrong to the extent of £29,000. So that he will have £38,000 out of the £95,000; and how the honourable gentleman is going to get more I do not know. I submit that any one who has watched the fluctuations in the public accounts will doubt whether by following the precedent we have set in that most immoral Bill which we have passed this session for the inscription of stock, and for borrowing in anticipation of an increased revenue in the future, we shall realize the results anticipated. I do not know how the honourable gentleman is going to provide for the sums which he tells us he is going to borrow, for it is certain that he cannot provide for them under the Statement which he has given us. I will now briefly sum up the points which I have submitted to the House. We find that those honourable gentlemen have undertaken to push on reproductive works with great vigour, and they have taken great credit to themselves for having found the means to do it. But, when we come to look at the facts, we find that they have not large sums to spend on reproductive works. The amount they can spend on railways during the current year and the year following is about £800,000; but put it at £900,000, if you like, to take the outside figure: that is, say they can expend at the rate of £450,000 a year for two years. That is what they propose to do in that respect. Then, Sir, they tell us that our power of borrowing may be safely taken at from a million to a mil-

lion and a half, and they give us figures to show us that it is so. But they ignore the charges. which I have shown must clearly be put upon it—a charge of £28,000 upon the Four-Million Loan. Then, they have departed from the lines which this House has been laying down for years, and they are again making special grants for particular works, without giving reasons to the House for those works. They have also launched out again into an expenditure on edu-cation and on public buildings. They are also extending all the open lines of railway at a greater rate than the late Government proposed to do it, and they are asking for some £180,000 to spend on this purpose during six months of the current year. I ask, then, how is it possible for the honourable gentlemen to fulfil the promise which they have given to the country to push on all these works with expedition, as they have told us they are prepared to do? I hope the honourable gentleman will be in a position to answer the questions I have put to him. I hope he will show that I am mistaken, and that he is going to spend much larger sums on railways than are here put down. I must say I do not know where the money is to come from. I say, they are bound by the pledge which they have given to this House and the country to push on reproductive works; and I say that they have altogether failed in showing us how they are going to do that. They are, in reality, only following the lines of the late Government, and, in so far as they are following those lines, I have no fault to find with them, except to this extent: that I ask them to come down from the high fence which they occupy, to confess that all this talk has been simply assumption, and that it is not their intention to carry on works with greater vigour or with more satisfaction to the country

generally than the late Government did.
Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—Upon several occa sions lately-in fact, from the moment I had finished delivering the Public Works Statement-we have been led to anticipate that, when the time came—which has at last arrived—for the honourable member for Egmont to criticise the Statement, we should have a full and complete exposé of the mistakes and errors of the Statement, and that a great deal was going to be made of the misrepresentations. and the charges which the honourable member has said to-night were made or were to be inferred from the language of the Statement. But I think honourable members must have been somewhat disappointed with the speech we have just heard. Every honourable member who has been long in this House will quite understand that, no matter what figures might be laid before the honourable entleman, he is perfectly able to pick them to pieces, and to put them into a shape that suits him for the particular moment. I do not say for one moment that the honourable gentleman would wilfully misrepresent me, or that he wishes to take any unfair advantage of me; for I admit that, as compared with him, I am simply a baby in finance, and I recognize that he is a master of the finance of the country. But there

are one or two points in connection with which he fell into error. He was, for instance, in error when he said we were going to spend £522,584 for additions to opened railways. We are doing nothing of the sort, because the £522,000 includes the liabilities of the previous Govern-

Major ATKINSON.—I said so.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—I did not understand the honourable gentleman to say so. Then, he went on, in reference to the same paragraph—which says, "We shall also have to pay out of this vote for rails and renewals on working railways the sum of £100,000 "-to contend that this could not come out of the £522,584. Of course it does not. We ask for a vote of £1,567,516. It comes out of this.

Major ATKINSON .- It does not read so.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—Yes, as the honourable member will see it does, if he reads the Statement again. Then, I understood him to say that at the end of the year we should only have £420,000 free out of the vote; whereas the fact is there will be about £623,000.

Major ATKINSON.—£567,000. Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—Well, I am obliged to take the departmental figures, and as they are given to me they show a balance of £623,000.

Major ATKINSON.—Then the figures in the

Statement must be wrong.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—And, in addition to that, as the honourable member knows perfectly well, there will be liabilities incurred to a considerable extent, and thereby a large amount of money is chargeable to this year. However, I do not think it is really worth while to follow him through these figures any further, because we know that, when disputing about figures, no two people can come to the same conclusion. Then, the honourable gentleman deemed it necessary to make some remarks in defence of the officers of the Public Works Department. Now, nothing could induce me to say one word against the officers of the Public Works Department, and I certainly cannot conceive that the wording of this paragraph can bear the construction which the donourable gentleman would put upon it. I understand that what he takes exception to is this sentence:

"The time that has elapsed since the Government took office has not been sufficient to enable me to make myself thoroughly acquainted with the proceedings of the various branches of the Public Works Department, and I have had to depend in a great measure upon the figures and reports submitted to me by the several official heads of the department."

Well, whate I mean is that, in dealing with such matters, the Minister for Public Works should have a personal acquaintance with the figures and the works the department has in hand: at all events, that is my idea of the position a Minister should occupy. But at the time I delivered that Statement I had not, and, indeed, up to the present time I have not, had time to make myself so well acquainted with the figures connected with matters on

which I should have to express opinions in the House as I should have liked. I therefore expressed myself clearly on that point at starting; and that is the whole meaning of the paragraph. There is another point on which he laid stress, and that was with reference to the statement I made that on the 31st March the colony had 1,400 miles of railway open for He says that immediately after I expressed the opinion that the railways were in an unsatisfactory state. But that referred to a totally different state of things. The one refers to opened railways, and the other to railways in course of construction. There is one point of some importance raised by the honourable member, and that is the statement that the Government is spending very little on railways and a great deal on roads. I think, if the honourable gentleman will look into the matter, he will find that the bulk of the votes for roads are merely re-votes. As to the Kaikoura Road, I may explain that, in the opinion of the Government, the railway going north-ward from Canterbury has gone about as far as it can go for some time, and the Government think that communication should be completed as far as practicable between the northern terminus of the railway from Canterbury and the southern terminus from Picton. Not only that, but expenditure has been incurred for works in progress for some distance, and these works are of very little value until the sum we propose to spend has been expended. That is our reason for putting this sum on the estimates for this Kaikoura Road. I do not know that there are any other points that I need reply to. I have no reason to complain of the criticism. On a topic of this sort it is not difficult to say a great deal.in criticism, but I do not complain of the manner in which the honourable gentleman has approached the subject.
Sir J. VOGEL.—I do not wish to prolong the

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discussion, and I shall confine myself to a very few remarks in reference to the honourable gentleman's criticism of our finance. The fact of the case is, that the honourable gentleman seems to be quite unaware that between 1882–88—when his Financial and Public Works Statements were made in which authority was asked to raise a three-million loan—and the present time he has, so to speak, anticipated a whole year. In 1882, when he said in his Financial Statement that he proposed to take authority for the issue of a loan in 1883, he expressly stated, "The Government are quite determined not to enter into engagements in anticipation of raising money at a particular date." Now, these are very few words, but I wish the House to bear them in mind. Then he proceeded to raise the loan early in 1883; so that, in other words, it would only be between January and March, 1888, if they were to hold to the promises made to the House, that they would have impinged at all on the Three-Million Loan. That was further

emphasized by the Minister for Public Works in his Public Works Statement. He said,— "I beg to call the particular attention of honourable members to the rate of expendi-

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ture, because the Government does not desire to anticipate any portion of the loan be-fore it is raised, and therefore it may happen that fewer contracts will be entered into during this year than during the last. year we disbursed nearly a million, and in-curred liabilities to more than half a million. We began the current financial year with 2924,000 in hand available for the year's dis-bursements, and we propose not to incur liabilities in excess of this amount until after the loan has been floated. We shall probably, therefore, reach the termination of the financial year with only such outstanding liabilities as we may incur after the floating of the loan. Consequently, when honourable members meet next session, it is probable they will find the Three-Million Loan but little en-

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croached upon." Therefore the promise was that the new loan expenditure should commence in 1883. were to meet the House in 1883 with the new loan but little encroached upon; you were not to anticipate the expenditure of this loan. It was not to be floated before January; therefore there would only be such expenditure as would be incurred between the end of January and the 31st March, 1883, out of that Three-Million Loan. Now, it is fresh in honourable members' minds what the honourable gentleman's Financial Statement was this year — 1884. was the fact that we had to borrow £100,000 to carry on the public works to September: that is to say, there were two millions gone, and we needed, to carry on up to September, £100,000 besides; so that from March, 1883, until September, 1884—a period of about eighteen months—not only were two millions gone, but £100,000 additional had to be taken. Sir, the honourable gentleman, with a hardihood and coolness for which I envy him, came down with his Financial Statement in June last, and absolutely assumed and took it for granted that the House had authorized the expenditure of that Three-Million Loan from March, 1882: he took a whole year's advantage; whilst the expenditure was designed for the years 1883, 1884, and 1885. According to their statements, according to their promises, according to the intention under which that loan was raised, it should not have been commenced with until 1883-84; and, yet, what is the fact? Two millions are exhausted by the end of August, and an additional £100,000 is borrowed by extraordinary aid granted by this House; and the first thing I have to do when I come into office is to obtain £500,000 on account of the third million; and the whole of the third million will be exhausted by the 31st March, 1885—in other words, in two years, instead of three. Now, the honourable gentleman has come down and impugned the statement made by my colleague in the Public Works Statement, which was made in the most merciful spirit to the honourable gentleman, stating the facts without any embellishment, and with a desire not to show how completely the finance of the honourable gentleman had broken down. Why, this second million, borrowed this year, should

have been made to last up to March next; and the honourable gentleman, in his Statement in June, had to explain how he had anticipated its expenditure. He told us how much he had taken out for open railways and other That was how we were launched into things. the difficulty that up to September we required a loan of £100,000. When you come to contrast the beautiful purity and prudery of the assurances given by the Colonial Treasurer and the Public Works Minister in 1882, that they would not on any account enter into engagements in advance of the money being raised, and bear in mind the fact that, if they had not been totally false to that pledge, at about the end of July the whole of the public works of the colony would have collapsed, and liabilities could not have been met, you may see how much value you may place, not only on the assurances of the late Government, but upon the policy which they set forth to carry out. Now, let us follow this a little further. In order to carry on up to the end of the year we had to make arrangements for an anticipation of £500,000 out of the third million. That. is in addition to £100,000 of deficiency bills— I think the term "expediency bills" would be a better name. This £500,000 and £100,000 -which, in round numbers, will carry us on until about the end of the year next month -has been anticipated out of the third million; and we anticipate that we shall have fully expended, and probably somewhat over-expended, that third million by the 31st March next; whereas, if the intentions and promises of the late Government had been carried into effect, that money would have lasted for one year longer. It is no good for the honourable gentleman to say "No," because I have the easiest test possible to prove that it is so. Was it not part of the honourable gentleman's policy to borrow the third million in 1885? If he was not to enter into engagements before borrowing the money, what had he to spend in 1885-86 excepting that third million? The honourable gentleman seems highly delighted now, and no doubt must be amused at the way in which he hoodwinked the previous House and deceived honourable members by the astonishing hardihood of taking a whole yearinto his confidence, we will say—in anticipating the expenditure of the loan. When you discuss what we have been able to do, you must remember that we, as a Government, inherited the responsibilities of the previous Government. Now, I have not at all overstated the case in telling you that the third million will be overexpended this year. There are collateral matters with which I am sorry to have to trouble the House, and with regard to which I would rather, if possible, shield the late Government from exposure. When the third million is negotiated there are engagements with the banks at Home to pay something like £400,000 out of it to take up scrip belonging to Trust Funds, upon which the Government has obtained advances

Major ATKINSON.—Hear, hear.

Sir J. VOGEL.—The way in which these

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peas were put under the thimble—these Trust Funds and loans from the Public Works Fund -was startling in its intricacy. The obligations which have to be overtaken before we can reduce our system to plain work are something astounding. It is a small amount, but there is £20,000 of the Public Works Fund invested in the Hakateramea - Duntroon Railway. The interest on that is overdue for three years. Those gentlemen who composed the late Government, who were so indignant with us for coming down with proposals making provision for district railways, absolutely took Public Works Funds, mortgaged over and over again for liabilities, and invested them in a district railway which they knew could not pay interest on the advances. Besides the £20,000 taken out of the Public Works Fund, as I have said, when the third million is negotiated, we shall have to take up something like \$400,000 advanced by the Bank of England and the Bank of New Zealand on scrip belonging to the Trust Funds, and we shall have that scrip to sell upon the market. In other words, before that million will be available for expenditure we have to take that scrip and sell it in the London market. Then, the late Government also arranged with the Bank of England for an advance of £750,000 to pay off the balance of the 5-30 5-per-cent, loan. That is not repayable until a later period—June of next year. That is also an open advance. Now, when we came to consider what expenditure we should have available to propose to the House, we had to consider how we were to deal with the English money-market according to the pledges given by the Government. The third million was not to be negotiated until the beginning of next year; and, if you had to depend upon that, what would be the result? Its expenditure would be required up to and before the end of March next, and yet, before that expenditure could be incurred, the advances made by those banks at Home would have to be paid. Of course, if the scrip is saleable and is sold in London, the Public Works Fund could be released, and a corresponding amount of that million would be available. When we came to consider the situation, and looked at the outstanding engagements, we decided that the very least we could do with was an addition of a million and a half; and with that we thought it was necessary to content ourselves until 1886, and that was the amount proposed of the new loan. I do not know if honourable members observe the exceeding ingenuity of the late Government in dividing itself into two. When you see those two honourable gentlemen together, the honourable members for Egmont and Geraldine, you would think they were brothers, so affectionately disposed are they to each other; and yet during the session there has been an uncommon want of agreement between them. Not long ago, when the honourable member for Geraldine was looking over one of the Government measures, he turned to the honourable member for Egmont and said, "Is not this monstrous?" "No," said the honour-

able member for Egmont; "I think it very reasonable." That actually took place, because the two gentlemen spoke so loud that they were overheard by honourable members who were behind them. And it will be observed that there was a palpable split between the members of the late Government. Does the While the honourable House not see this? member for Geraldine is deploring constantly the borrowing tendencies of the Government, the charge made against the Government by the honourable member for Egmont is that they are not borrowing sufficient to carry out what he calls his vigorous policy. One section of the late Government is always saying that we are inclined to borrow too much; whilst the charge made against us by the honourable member for Egmont is that we are not inclined to borrow sufficiently. Between these two it would be hard to find the happy medium. The statement as regards the condition of the loan was, as I have said, literally true from first to last. The honourable member for Egmont, as I have said, anticipated a whole year, and we are now brought face to face with the fact that, with an expenditure which the honourable member, in his colonizing spirit, believes suffi-cient, we shall want a million and a half more than he anticipated in 1882. I do not say this by way of reproach. I think there are great hopes for the honourable member for Egmont. In 1876, when I left the country, that honourable gentleman was thoroughly imbued with the general principles of colonization. We know how "evil communications cor-rupt good manners." The honourable gentleman has fallen into bad hands, and the course he has taken this session, and what he has said to-night—that we are not going far enough in a colonizing direction—shows me that, like force relieved from confinement, the honourable gentleman, now that he can take free and independent action, is inclined to spring up once more into life and to advocate a colonizing policy. That we have not been able to propose larger measures to the House this session is because we have been thoroughly weighted by the responsibilities created by the late Government, not only in the shape of liabilities here, but in the shape of commitments at Home, which must injure our hopes of possible assistance in the London market. I have only further to say, if there is any honourable member unaware of the fact, that, for the first time for many years, we have now a Minister at the head of the Public Works Department who thoroughly understands it. There is no gainsaying that; and I attribute it to the modesty and merit of the late Government that, being so thoroughly aware of their incompetence to conduct the affairs of the department, they, by Orders in Council, made over the responsibility of managing the department to the departmental officer. If these Orders in Council were published, under which authorities were given to the General Manager, it would be found that, virtually, he might have the right to order the Minister out of the offices of the depart-

Major ATKINSON. - Bring them down to-

morrow. Publish them. Sir J. VOGEL.—That was the way the Government handed over its duties.

Major ATKINSON.—Let us have them.

Sir J. VOGEL. - The whole weight of the matter was thrown upon this departmental officer, and the Minister was a sort of ornamental appendage to make promises and smooth matters between various members of the House and the department. It will be found now that Parliament will have this department in charge of a Minister who will be able to come down and explain everything connected with it from personal knowledge and acquain-Another peculiarity tance with the same. characterized the late Government in connection with roads. The amount now set down is nearly all for the purpose of fulfilling the obligations of the late Government, and no one laments more than I do that the money is not to be expended, or most of it, on railways. The road-making of the late Government was of the most costly and extravagant nature: not because of attention to local requirements, but because of the fact that the late Minister of Lands set up a department of his own for making roads to enable lands to be sold. were three road-making departments in the late Government: The Public Works Department made roads; the Native Department was its own road-maker; and the Minister of Lands had his department for road-making; and it is a fact that the myrmidons of each came into collision with each other. The same roads have been authorized by two Ministers, and the County Councils have authorized the same to be made. In Otago a County Council authorized a road to be made. The men went out to work on it, but they found there were already road-makers there belonging to the Minister of Lands. The men belonging to the County Council retired, and the County Council felt very happy at seeing the road being made by the Minister of Lands. If I am not incorrectly informed, miles and miles of roads have been made by the Minister of Lands which are now absolutely overgrown. expenditure was incurred with a view to the selling of the adjoining lands; but the lands were never sold, the roads have become overgrown, and the large expenditure incurred has been thrown away. I trust we shall not have three road-making departments in the present Government. We shall also endeavour as far as possible to throw on the local bodies the charge of making local roads. We have done this work as fast as we can; but we cannot do it any faster, owing to the obligations and responsibilities that have been cast upon us by the late Government. I am not insensible of the fact that it is almost incumbent upon the honourable member for Egmont to make some show of defending his finance and policy; and the fact that he has determined, at this late period of the session, to enter upon that defence shows how distasteful the task is to him.

Major ATKINSON.—It was consideration for

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Sir J. VOGEL.—The honourable gentleman's consideration for us is exceedingly great, and we are grateful to him, especially as we recognize that the honourable gentleman is not unmindful of the consideration that is due to I admit that the honourable member for Egmont has behaved very well. Hemmed round as he was with responsibilities that were not of his own seeking or administration, having, so to speak, to bear upon his back a vast amount of Ministerial responsibility, he has chosen with considerable tact a middle course, so as to as far as possible appear not unfaithful and disloyal to his old colleagues. have expressed dissatisfaction at the want of action on the part of the honourable member for Egmont and said, "Why do you not oppose this, and why do you not oppose that, and why did you not find fault with the other?" he has reasonably answered them, "I will not go beyond my convictions; I will leave that to you to do. I will defend the late Government once or twice during the session upon general grounds. I will make a financial speech and introduce plenty of figures; but, as to opposing the Government day after day, I will not do anything of the kind." The honourable gentleman has gained the respect of the House by Nobody could possibly taking that course. consider that it was possible for the gentlemen on these benches to be able to come down with anything worthy of consideration if they had believed what has been said by one member of the late Government. If he were to be believed, nothing that we have proposed was worthy of consideration, and hardly anything we said was within the limits of truth. The honourable member for Egmont will have discharged his loyal obligations to his late colleagues by the speech which he has made tonight and the one which he proposes to make on the third reading of the Appropriation Bill; and it would have shown want of consideration to have allowed his remarks now to pass unchallenged. Honourable members will see that we have been limited to a large extent in our proposals by having to carry out the responsibilities of the late Government. The present Government hope to deal with the small means at their command with a view to productive results as early as possible. Our proposals are to carry out the railways with a view to their giving us some revenue in return for the expenditure incurred upon them. We have not deceived the House by leading it to suppose that this is a spasmodic effort at colonization. It must go on year after year, and the House must carefully consider the position of the finance and the condition of the colony with the view of determining what works shall be authorized and what money shall be borrowed from year to year, having regard to all the traditions of the colony. I regret very much, at this period of the session, to have so far intruded upon the attention of the House

Mr. BRYCE. — It requires something like courage to make anything resembling a speech at this period of the session, considering the

impatience of honourable members to get away. And yet I think it is scarcely fitting that the Public Works Statement should not meet with discussion. This Statement, it seems to me, deals to a very large extent—to a very unusual extent—with finance, and hence, in that respect, it is a Financial Statement. It deals also, so far as promises are concerned, with political subjects, and it is, in truth, a political Public Works Statement. With respect to the financial aspect of the question, the Hon the Colonial Treasurer has declared that the honourable member for Egmont is a "baby" in finance, and the Hon. the Minister for Public Works declares that he himself is a "baby" as compared with the honourable member for Egmont. What position I shall occupy, or whose "baby" I may be, I am sure I do not pretend to say. I am a moderate-minded man, and, since the Colonial Treasurer has not chosen to defend the Statement or really to reply to the honourable member for Egmont, I think I shall pin my faith to the views of the honourable member for Egmont. The Colonial Treasurer has made an attack upon the late Government. He has told us some funny stories—all laughable, I may say—some of them having truth in them, and some of them not capable of proof. He has proved one story, which he has taken occasion to tell in rather a peculiar manner. He says that honourable gentlemen on these benches were overheard by members sitting behind them to make certain statements in private conversation. That is a kind of proof that I should not have expected from the Treasurer; but, seeing that the proof is so much to his taste in that case, we may admit that that particular story is true. The honourable member has spoken on finance, and has tried to make this House believe perfectly inconceivable things. He stated that the late Government had proposed the Three-Million Loan long before it was wanted. That was the purport of his argument, if I understood it aright; and really it was beyond belief. He went on to complain afterwards that very little of this Three-Million Loan had been left free. Well, it was not left free, because it was deliberately tied up by the Loan Act: it was properly tied up originally, and therefore cannot be free now. I shall not enter upon the financial question, which I think has been very well dealt with; but I will say, in regard to the political subjects referred to in this Public Works Statement, that I think most of us will agree with the Minister for Public Works that, if it is possible to devise non-political Boards which would assist in the management of the railways, it would be very well to do so; but the honourable member will, I am sure, admit that it is a subject of considerable difficulty so to devise a Board as to leave it sufficiently free from the control of this House, and at the same time not too free. That is a difficulty. If he can solve that difficulty in a perfectly satisfactory manner, I believe it will be the first time it has ever been solved; and I am sure it will give universal satisfaction to the colony. I think it cannot be solved in a per-

fect manner, but, if he makes even an approximation to a solution, I for one shall not regret it. That is a promise I only hope the honourable member will be able to fulfil. The honourable member also made another promise, in reference to local government - a very important promise indeed; but I think we heard something like it before—and a good while before. I think I have some faint recollection of an old promise made by the Colonial Treasurer of the establishment of local governing bodies to take the place of Provincialism. I think I remember his using an expression at that time that has been very often quoted in this House. I think I remember his assuring us that questions of roads and bridges would be no longer mentioned in this House except as subjects for congratulation that they were no longer to be dealt with on the floor of this House. I remember that at that time he promised to the local bodies "substantial endowments." It is true he does not now promise "substantial endowments;" but he uses an equivalent term, "an assured income." That is the phrase he now uses for "substantial endowments." As for local government, I say this: that there is in this country a great deal of local government. If you can only supply your army of local Governments with the sinews of war, they will be able to fight through their difficulties. That is all they really want. If you can find them "an assured income" they will do very well. But it is quite possible that that "assured income" may be no more forthcoming than were the "substantial endowments." If I understand the objection which has been mined from time to time against the has been raised from time to time against the procedure of the late Government in reference to the construction of public works, it has been that their management has been fragmentary in its character. Now, I say that that probably was quite true; but I add that it must be the case in respect to any Government in carrying on public works. The configuration of the country and the necessities of localities require a great many of these works to be carried on simultaneously, and the works will always be open to that objection. At any rate, I see no indication in the Public Works Statement before us that there will be any improvement in that respect. The honourable gentleman who spoke last has stated that the honourable member for Egmont was imbued with a true colonizing spirit at the time the present Treasurer left for England. I admit that the honourable member for Egmont was, of the late Government, perhaps the most sanguine in his desire to carry on public works; and perhaps, also, I was the least sanguine of that Government, or the least desirous of indulging in borrowing. It has been said in this House, as if it were beyond question, that the late Government had intended to carry on the construction of public works at the rate of one million per annum for an almost indefinite time, or until the scheme of public works was completed. Well, I never understood it in that way. It is quite true that at the time the Three-Million Loan was entered upon it was de-

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cided to expend the Three-Million Loan at the rate of a million a year, with a million extra for the North Island Railway. But I, for one, never understood that it would be incumbent upon the Government to propose to continue that expenditure at the same rate. It is possible that I should have agreed to this rate of expenditure; but I should have done so against my own judgment and because I could not do better, for I do think that we ought to curtail our borrowing rather than increase it. I think in that lies our only safety. I should have advocated—whether I should have carried it or not—a continued borrowing at a less rate than a million a year, with a gradual reduction; for I believe, if you go on borrowing at this rate and are suddenly stopped some time—as we may be from outside causes that we cannot control—very grave difficulties may fall upon the colony in consequence; it would produce, I believe, great disturbance in the balance of trade, and might, in that way, produce commercial disaster. As has been pointed out to me by a person for whose opinion I have great respect, it might also lead to a large number of men being thrown out of employment. Money would certainly in that case have to be borrowed at a higher rate of interest than the colony would like to pay, merely to provide funds for the employment of those men who might otherwise be reduced to a state of very great distress. Now, I think the only way to avoid these possible disasters is to gradually diminish our loans. My own idea would be to diminish these loans until they came down to almost a vanishing-point, and then we might be in a fair position to consider whether of not the colony was in a condition to borrow further. Now, I should like to say a word about the expenditure upon opened lines, which is really a very serious matter for consideration. The Minister for Public Works will, I am sure, be aware that there will be always great pressure brought to bear upon him to improve the open railways. It is from settled districts that the pressure will come for further expenditure. I pointed out, on a former occasion, that the House is really to some extent deceived, or has been to some extent deceived, by the manner in which these votes were taken. For instance, votes were taken for the Wellington-Woodville The House understood, in a way, Railway. that the vote was for an extension of the railway; but sums had to be taken from this vote for the improvement of the line opened. I would point out this: that, if we are to continue to borrow for the purpose of improving those lines already open, we shall curtail our powers to construct new works. The colony can only borrow a certain amount, or would be only supposed to borrow a certain amount, of money, and, of course, whatever you take from that and expend upon open lines you must subtract from the amount available for expenditure upon extension of lines or upon new lines. Therefore it is that we ought to carefully guard against any increased expenditure on open lines. So far as I understand the Statement, while the

expenditure on open lines is condemned, and, I think, properly condemned, there is no disposition shown to curtail that expenditure; and, indeed, as I read the estimates, the intention is rather to increase the expenditure of that sort. As I said on a former occasion, I understand £170,000 is to be spent on open lines, and I think that is far too much. My view of the question is that a line should be completed in a moderate manner, as to both construction and equipment, and nothing further should be done towards improving that line until it can improve itself—until the returns from that line are sufficient to make the improvements. I think, unless we adopt some such principle as that, a very large proportion of the money that we have available for railway construction will be absorbed by open lines. I have said that I agree with the honourable gentleman in the condemnation, to some extent, of what has been done in the past; and I am sorry to add that I am afraid that the expenditure in that way is going to be increased rather than di-minished in the future. Sir, I will not say now more than a word or two in regard to my objection to increased borrowing, for, since I have been desirous to reduce the borrowing below a million, it must be evident from that fact that I have considerable objection to seeing it increased to a million and a half. I think it is going in the wrong direction, and is likely . to produce ultimately bad results to the country; for I conceive, if you indulge in large expenditure of borrowed money, you do not by that means increase the productiveness of the country. On the contrary, for a time at least, and for a considerable time, the effect will be in exactly the opposite direction. That is evident from our experience in this colony already, for, although our expenditure of borrowed money has been very large, yet the products of the country are lower per head than they are in any other colony. I think that must be so, and cannot very well be otherwise, because the expenditure of this money, which has not been earned, but which has been derived from losn and other sources, must have the effect of increasing the number of traders and middlemen, and causing a great aggregation of people in the centres. That is the reason, I take it, why the productive power of this country in proportion to population is so low. I shall not trouble the House by going further into this question, and, indeed, I feel it is a very difficult matter to speak at all, considering the anxiety of honourable members to close the session.

Mr. GUINNESS.—I only wish to express the great pleasure which one remark of the Tressurer afforded me, when he pointed out the anomalous system of government instituted by the Atkinson Ministry, and drew attention to the fact, in regard to the construction of roads and bridges, that the Lands Department, the Native Department, and the Public Works Department were all engaged in this work. should like to draw attention to the fact that the Mines Department was also engaged in it, and likewise the Survey Department; so that we had, in reality, five departments of the; General Government engaged in local works. I am glad the Treasurer has called attention to this matter, so that we may hope he will step in and prevent the construction of local works being carried on in the way it has been for years past. If you have County Councils and Borough Councils, and other local bodies, and if money is voted for local works, then the members of these local bodies should be the best judges to decide upon the direction and mode in which these local works should be carried out. There is also another system which has grown up, of taking the advice of the Wardens as to the direction in which roads should be constructed, and that is a system which I think should not be carried on. I hope the present Government will not follow the late Government in that direction

ment in that direction. Mr. HURSTHOUSE. — I am not going to discuss either this Government or the late Government, or to say which are the best administrators. I think a great deal more is said on the merits of various Administrations than is either pleasant to listen to or expedient for the good of the country. It does not matter very greatly to the inhabitants of New Zealand who is the Prime Minister of the colony, so long as you have a tolerably honest administration; and I deprecate the remarks which are bandied about from one side of the House to the other as to maladministration of the affairs of the country. I have no doubt that, at the end of five years, if those honourable gentlemen are still in office, a considerable amount of maladministration will be on record against them, and I only hope that they will be dealt with in a moderate spirit. I regretted very much to hear the Colonial Treasurer say that in his opinion a policy of construction of roads and bridges was not in the interest of the colony—that in fact, if this policy of opening up Crown lands by the construction of roads prior to sale was to be continued, it would have to be done at the expense of the local bodies. Now, coming from a part of the colony which has never participated in the railway construction of New Zealand, I have always strongly held that, so long as the colony continues to borrow largely, we, in such districts, have a right to demand that a portion of the loan shall be expended in the construction of roads and bridges for the benefit of such districts, if we are to be taxed equally with other districts which benefit by the expenditure, and if we are to contribute, year by year, our share to the ex-penses in the way of interest and other charges on the loans which are raised. What will be the position of those of us who live in those districts if the policy which the Treasurer has stated is given effect to? In the Public Works Statement it is admitted that, if these works and other charges, such as charitable aid, are to be cast on the local bodies, special taxation, either a property- or an income-tax, will have to be resorted to to meet this expenditure; and I presume there will also be the ordinary taxation to meet the interest on the loans for railways; so that those who are unfortunate enough to live in districts where there are no railways

will be taxed for them, and will also have to find money to construct roads and bridges and other works. I think that is a very great error. The policy of making roads to open up land is certainly a much sounder one than the making of railways. The honourable member for Greymouth seems to be very sad because there have been four or five departments engaged in the construction of roads, but I should have thought that he would have been extremely glad that such was the case. I take it that, so long as those works are done reasonably and economically, it does not matter which department makes them. I have been very unsuccessful in getting them made by any department, and I should be glad if all the five departments went to work in my district. Now, I wish to put on record my opinion as to the effect of the policy of public works of the present Government. Many years ago I came to the conclusion-and it has been forced upon me much more rapidly of late—that the railway policy of New Zealand is going to land us in great difficulties. The Minister for Public Works estimates that there will be an annual increase in the revenue from the railways, and he makes that calculation with the startling fact staring him in the face that for the last twelve months the railway receipts have not at all increased in proportion to the mileage opened, owing to the fact that local productions—and more especially the production of grain, which has been a large contributor to the railway revenue - have been almost paralysed, and that the price of merchandise has been low throughout the whole world, while there appears to be no prospect of better times. With these facts in view, it is still the policy of the Government to borrow largely, and I look forward with the greatest anxiety to the effects of this borrowing policy. My own opinion is that the policy of the country should be to gradually reduce the public works expenditure until it is brought within reasonable limits, and that the energy of the colony should be concentrated on completing each of the chief lines of railway in its turnthat we should devote the whole of the money we are going to borrow to that work—and that other parts of New Zealand should wait until these works are completed and until we see the effect of them on the taxpayer. I think if such a policy had been put in operation it would have had the effect of gradually reducing the public expenditure and the borrowing powers of the Government. There are many railways which do not pay their expenses. There is, for instance, the Foxton-New Plymouth Railway: if I am rightly informed, it takes £107 to collect every £100 of revenue from that railway. The Minister for Public Works tells us that when the main trunk line is completed it will add enormously to the productiveness of the fragmentary lines throughout the North Island. No doubt it will add a certain amount to the railway revenue; but I hold that, when that line is completed, and when other gigantic works are completed, unless there is some great advance in the staple products of the country, the receipts from the:

railways, in proportion to the mileage open, will decrease very considerably. I am sorry the Government did not see their way to decide upon a moderate policy, and so reduce our taxation, and bring our annual expenditure within reasonable limits.

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Mr. ROLLESTON. - There are a few words that I wish to say with reference to some observations which fell from the Colonial Tressurer. I do not intend to raise any debatable matter, but I am sure the House will think I am justified in placing on record on this occasion, one of the few that now remain to the surface of the surfa main to us, a few facts in regard to a question in which I take great interest—that is, the question of road-making in future. No doubt one of the most embarrassing questions at the present time for any Government to determine is how to deal with different classes of roads -roads through settled districts, main roads, and roads to open up Crown lands. Any system of local government which can be devised by the Government must have for its object the placing upon localities the duty of making local roads. But what I want to lay down as an axiom is this: that, with regard to deal-ing with the waste lands of the Crown in a satisfactory way, there is no other satisfactory method of opening up these lands than that of the Government doing it. I hold that idea firmly. The principle upon which the waste lands have been administered during the last four or five years has been that the proceeds of Crown lands should be primarily charged with the cost of efficiently opening up other blocks of land for sale. The work that has been done has been characterized by the Colonial Treasurer in a way that it very little deserves. He says there has been confusion between the functions of the local Government and the functions of the departments of the General Government. It may be that there has been a certain amount of confusion, but it proceeded necessarily from the condition of things with which we had to deal. The department over which I have had the honour of presiding has taken every opportunity to utilize the different agencies that were available, and has done so successfully. I should like to place on record what has been done during the last four years in respect of opening up Crown lands; and it is shown in the following return obtained from the Lands Department :-

A GENERAL STATEMENT of the Area of Crown Lands opened out by Roads during the Last Four Years.

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		Roads.	Area.	Cost.	
	7	lorth Is	land.	<u> </u>	
		Miles.	Acres.	£	
Auckland		379	494,000	72,423	
Taranaki		230	206,000	24,844	
Hawke's Bay		96	148,000	7,642	
Wellington	• •	219	256,000	29,578	
Sundry roads	••	••	•••	4,154	
Totals		924	1,104,000	138,141	

Mr. Hursthouse

South Island.							
		Miles.	Acres.	2			
Nelson		98	68,000	20,216			
Marlborough	••	18	12,000	7,441			
Westland		83	130,000	25,538			
Canterbury		42	80,000	13,323			
Otago		130	271,000	26,564			
Southland	••	35	39,000	11,122			
Totals		406	600,000	104,204			
Whole Colony.							
Totals	••	1,330	1,704,000	242,345			

Court Toloma

During the same period of four years-from the 31st March, 1880, to the 20th March, 1884-1,277,593 acres have been disposed of, as follow: On settlement conditions (3,946 selectors), 583,215 acres; for cash, 694,378 acres: total, 1,277,598 acres. The Treasurer deals largely with the questions of railways and financing, but my belief is that, at the present time, we have railways running through country which is practically waste, for the want of settle-ment. You have, for instance, in the Forty-Mile Bush, a large tract of country which, for all practical purposes, is shut up for want of roads; and the local bodies that now exist have no direct interest in opening up these lands by roads, or, anyhow, have not that direct interest which the central Government has. There is an excellent paragraph that I should like the House to mark in the Crown Lands Report for last year on this point. It reads as follows :-

"There are many blocks of valuable Crown lands in both Islands which could be adduced as of no more actual value for the practical purpose of settling a thriving population of them in their present inaccessible state than if they were so much waste or water. But it will suffice to adduce as an illustration that in the extensive area of Crown lands in the Seventy - Mile Bush, on the line between Masterton and Napier, there is an excellent coach - road running through, and a trunk line of railway also in course of construction. but, unless the Land Department is enabled to run cross branch roads from these trunk lines to the Crown lands, the influence of such great and costly lines of communication will have but a very partial effect in settling the lands even in their close vicinity."

No system of local government will really administer this work of "roading" land before sale as it should be done. The tendency of all local bodies is simply to improve roads near existing settlement; but what we want is to open up the land in such a way as to create revenue for the future, and foster settlement. The land question seems to me to be by far the greatest question for the consideration of the Government in the future—a far greater ques-tion than any other that can occupy their attention. We have had a Land Bill this session, and I believe that, with the improvements that have been put in it in Committee in both branches of the Legislature, it will be

a useful measure; but there is plenty of room for further improvements and for further provision to promote settlement. I am not at all atraid of the criticism of the Colonial Treasurer. He knows very little about it. He has hardly any idea of what this question of settlement means, except so far as it leads up to financing on the Stock Exchange; and to me-I have had as much practical experience of settlement as any one—it is quite beside the question that he should sneer at what has been done. The work of the Land Department from one end of the colony to the other is well known, and I am personally well known, and any criticism that the honourable member may pass will not affect the public estimate of the value of the work that has been done during the past five years. There are thousands of people who will be proud of the progress that has been made during that time.

Mr. STOUT.—I only wish to place on record to use the expression of the last speakerone or two words, in reply to what fell from the honourable member for Egmont on one point. He said, when referring to the Kaikoura Road, that this vote showed a new practice inaugu-nated by the Government. I cannot understand the honourable member. This Kaikoura Road has had thousands spent upon it during the last few years. Ten thousand pounds were spent upon it in 1882, and the Public Works Appropriation Act for 1883 also shows that several thousands were voted for the road. I admit that the question of roads has loomed too largely in this General Assembly. I pointed out long ago, at the time of Abolition, that the work of the Provincial Councils would be thrown upon the General Assembly: and that has come about. This system of opening up Crown lands before sale was started by Mr. Donald Reid, and £50,000 was the limit, and this money was to come out of the Land Fund: but it has developed into a road-making machine; and, although I agree that the local bodies do not pay sufficient attention to new districts, but confine their attention to settled districts, still it is an unfortunate thing that road-making should have come before Parliament as it has done. I do not believe that any system of local government will be either efficient or satisfactory to the people until Parlia-ment has been relieved of local duties. To me it is a most sad thing that so large an amount of the money that we are borrowing should be spent in road-making, and so little upon reproductive works which will immediately give revenue to the colony, like railways. But we have got into this system, and it will take a long time before we can get out of it; but, if we wish to have any progress or reform made in our finance, we must seek for it only in this way: By taking away from this central Parliament the local functions now cast upon it, and casting upon some local bodies, by whatever name they are called, road-making and many other colonizing operations that we now carry on through the General Government.

Motion agreed to.

IN COMMITTEE.
PUBLIC WORKS FUND.
CLASS II.—PUBLIC WORKS, DEPARTMENTAL.

Vote, £30,057, agreed to.

CLASS III .- RAILWAYS.

New Works. — Construction and Land, £780,200.

Mr. ROLLESTON asked if the main line from Napier to Wellington was decided to be taken by way of Palmerston North

taken by way of Palmerston North.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that there was no doubt about it. The latter was by farthe shortest route, and the gradients were easier.

Mr. ROLLESTON said the general understanding always had been that the Government would, in its own interest, further the line between Masterton and Woodville, rather than the one to connect at Palmerston. His experience convinced him that there would otherwise be great disappointment as to the settlement of the land from Woodville southward. By connecting with Palmerston through the Gorge they would be giving a large additional value to the railway and land of a private company, and, at the same time, he thought, very largely retarding the settlement of the best piece of land for settlement of all the Crown lands left. So far as he knew, there was now no land in New Zealand open for settlement equal to the Seventy-Mile Bush.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON quite agreed that it

Mr. E. RIOHARDSON quite agreed that it. would be better, to promote settlement, that the Masterton-Woodville line should be pushed on. But there was no idea of abandoning that.

line.

Mr. GUINNESS asked if the £6,000 for the Greymouth-Hokitika line could not be spent at the Greymouth end. That line was commenced about six years ago. At the Greymouth end some three or four miles had been made, but some of the culverts had been washed away, and several bridges had fallen down; and it was something similar at the Hokitika. end. Between the two towns there were three very large rivers to be bridged; and, if the Government intended to construct the line—as he certainly hoped they did—he thought they should have proposed votes to make these three big bridges, and then, if they were unable to complete the line, the bridges would come in for ordinary traffic, and there would be no waste of money. Making a few miles at each end was not spending the Public Works Fund as the Treasurer and the Government in bringing down their policy had said it ought to be spent. They condemned the fragmentary way in which railways had been made as an unwise policy, but now they seemed rather inclined to follow that policy. He trusted the Minister would see his way to spend the money in such a way as to get the large rivers bridged. The Government should put its foot down in this matter.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said, if the Government had put its foot down, it would have put its foot down against the spending of any

money at all on this line; but it had been represented to him that going on with the line at the Hokitika end would enable a part of the railway to be used. But for that he would have completed the bridges, and have asked for votes in the future for the line when the harbour works at Greymouth were more near completion.

Vote, £780,200, agreed to.

Additions to open lines, £308,538, agreed to. Permanent-way, sleepers, and rolling-stock,

£455,778.

Mr. G. F. RICHARDSON said the Edendale-Toitois Railway was useless till it was extended two miles. The end of the present formation was quite unapproachable. If the department found it undesirable to spend this £3,025 on the completion of the present section, could the money be devoted to more formation?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the votes were divided, and it would not be competent to divert this money.

Vote, £455,778, agreed to. .

CLASS IV.—SURVEYS OF NEW LINES OF RAIL-

Surveys of new lines, North Island, £16,000,

agreed to.

Surveys of new lines, Middle Island, £12,000. Mr. GILLIES asked what this was intended to cover. This was proposing to spend money on new lines before completing those already begun. Surely they should not start more new lines until some of those so long in progress had been finished.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said nearly all this amount had been already spent, mainly in connection with the survey of the East and West Coast line. Several incomplete surveys had to be finished, and there were others authorized by the House yet to be begun.

Vote, £12,000, agreed to.

CLASS V.—ROADS.

Roads, bridges, and wharves, North of Auckland, £103,800, agreed to.

Main roads, £56,600.

Mr. WILSON asked if the item, "Hokitika to Christchurch, £16,000," was for maintenance only.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the greater part was the unexpended portion of a vote of last

year, and the rest was for bridges.

Mr. CONOLLY asked the Minister for Public Works to make a note of the manner in which the main road through Pelorus District and the Rai Valley had been made. Certain portions had been completed in a very satisfactory manner; but certain other portions had been left entirely ungravelled, so that there were some miles of perfectly good road, intersected by a mile or two impassable for vehicles, being unmetalled; and yet it had been taken over from the contractors. Could the honourable gentleman see the reason for making the road in so peculiar a manner?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said he would make a

note of it.

Mr. BROWN said they ought to know more Mr. E. Bichardson

about this road. They had already spent £5,300, and now £8,500 more was to be voted. That was a large sum for a road in that district.

: Supply.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said nearly all the

money had been expended.

Mr. BROWN asked why so large a sum was spent on a road in a district of that kind with

so sparse a population.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the road had been decided upon seven or eight years ago, and money had been put on the estimates for it year after year, but not spent. There was a vote for it when he was formerly Minister for Public Works, and he believed the work had been begun in the old provincial days.

Vote, £56,600, agreed to.

Miscellaneous roads and bridges, £96,919.

Mr. GUINNESS wished to know whether these sums of money were voted to be expended in the districts under the supervision of the Government, or whether they would be handed over to the local bodies for expenditure.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that in some cases the money would be expended by the local bodies under the supervision of the Go-

Mr. BROWN thought that, where possible, the County Councils should be made use of, as by that means a good deal might be saved.

Mr. GILLIES thought the principle suggested was not a sound one, or one likely to lead to economy. The works should, he thought, be entirely under the control of the local body or of the Government; and, if the Government found the money, it should see to its expenditure.

Vote, £96,919, agreed to.

Grants in aid under "The Roads and Bridges Construction Act, 1882," £304,200, agreed to

Roads to open up lands before sale, £183,308. Mr. BEETHAM considered that a larger sum should have been placed on the estimates for expenditure in the Wairarapa District. Mr. ROLLESTON believed that the func-

tions of the Assembly ceased in regard to the making of roads and bridges when the land was The district referred to required opening up; it had a grand prospect before it, and had

been sadly neglected.
Dr. NEWMAN hoped the Minister would visit the Wairarapa during the recess, as that would convince him of the necessity for something more to be done. If the district round Masterton were opened with roads it would

carry a very large population.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE would like to know if the item, "Nelson - Miscellaneous, £1,600," was to enable the Nelson Land Board to purchase rights-of-way in certain cases. Mr. E. RICHARDSON.—Yes.

Vote, £183,808, agreed to. Roads on gold fields, £42,181, agreed to.

CLASS VI.—WATERWORKS ON GOLD FIELDS. Water-races, Middle Island, £12,857.

Mr. ROLLESTON asked what Sludgechannel No. 2 at Kumara was intended for. It seemed to him that the proper course would be for the Government not to make this channel, but to leave it to those who were interested |

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said this channel was intended as a relief-channel. Vote, £12,857, agreed to.

CLASS VII.—PURCHASE OF NATIVE LANDS.

NORTH ISLAND. Vote, £90,000, agreed to.

CLASS VIII .- TELEGRAPH EXTENSION. Vote, £29,322, agreed to.

CLASS IX.—PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

Judicial, £29,066. Mr. W. D. STEWART thought the amount expended in the erection of gaols all over the colony was altogether unnecessary. He observed there was again an amount of £7,000 for

the Mount Cook Prison. He begged to move, That the item be reduced by £1,000.

Dr. NEWMAN thought the Mount Cook

Prison ought to be proceeded with more expe-

Mr. TOLE understood that in about eighteen months' time a portion of this prison would be fit for occupation by prisoners. It would be a waste of money to stop the work now.

Mr. BROWN maintained that the prison ought not to be erected on a site in the centre of a large city, but should be placed a few miles out of town, where a larger area could be procured, with a view to future extension.

Mr. CONOLLY was rather surprised the question of the site of the Mount Cook Prison should be raised now, as it was settled long ago. It was absolutely necessary there should be a proper gaol in Wellington, because the gaol on the Terrace and the temporary prison at Mount Cook were totally unfit for the purpose. There was no cell accommodation, and the prisoners had to be lodged in large dormitories. With regard to the item, "Dunedin Gaol (new gaol site), £2,000," a similar amount was voted last year for a site. He would suggest that one of the quarantine islands at Dunedin might be utilized as a site for the gaol. The Inspector of Prisons was of opinion that such a site would be suitable.

Amendment agreed to.

Vote, as reduced, £28,066, agreed to.

Post and Telegraph offices, £9,711, agreed

Customhouses, £757, agreed to.

Survey offices and machinery, £3,300, agreed

Lunatic asylums, £50,700.

Mr. BROWN wished to have some explanation as to the item, "Lunatic Asylum, Porirua Road, Wellington, £1,500."

Mr. STOUT explained that it was proposed to erect an asylum at Porirua at some future date, and a site had been purchased for that purpose. The present asylum would then be available for school or other purposes.

Mr. ROLLESTON hoped that, in considering this question of buildings for an asylum, the Government would make themselves acquainted with the latest opinions as to the

construction of such buildings. It was generally admitted at Home to be a great mistake to crowd people together in monster institutions; and there they established village cottages, where there were means of classifying the inmates.

Vote, £50,700, agreed to.

Hospitals, £8,000, agreed to.

Quarantine stations, £1,000, agreed to. School-buildings, £68,300, agreed to.

Parliamentary Buildings, £250.

Dr. NEWMAN observed that last year a sum of £500 had been voted to improve the ventilation. He thought it would be an im-provement if the ventilators were plugged up. Mr. BARRON said a Committee had been

appointed to make inquiry as to the ventila-tion of the House. Mr. Turnbull and Dr. Gillon were examined, as experts. They recommended the adoption of a plan which, in the opinion of the Committee, seemed likely to be very efficient; and he understood that the Government were instructed to carry out the matter during the recess; but no steps were taken to give effect to the recommendation of the Committee. The result was that the air in the building was exceedingly foul, and the drafts were very uncomfortable. During the recess the Minister for Public Works might consider the matter, with the view of having something done in connection with the ventilation of the chamber before the meeting of the House next session.

Vote, £250, agreed to.

New Government Printing Office, £20, agreed

CLASS X .- LIGHTHOUSES AND HARBOUR WORKS.

Lighthouses, £16,116, agreed to.

Harbour Works, £39,800.
Mr. CONOLLY regretted to find that no vote was asked for the erection of a wharf at Picton, as one was very greatly needed there. The present wharf was very small and inconvenient, even for the steamer traffic. steamers visiting the port three or four times a week were so large, in proportion to the size of the wharf, that there was great difficulty in landing goods and passengers. It was very probable that a large export of frozen meat would take place from that port. Surveys were made with the view of considering what kind of wharf should be made there, and various estimates would be found in the offices of the Public Works Department. The one recommended as being the most leconomical was for the enlargement of the present wharf, which was still in very good condition. The estimate for extending the wharf was £3,500. The late Minister for Public Works made a note of this work for his successor, as being one urgently required, and he (Mr. Conolly) was much surprised that no vote had been put on the estimates for it.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON did not wish to interrupt the honourable gentleman in the few words he was addressing to his constituents. This work had been taken into consideration,

and was already provided for.

Mr. GUINNESS would like to know whether the expenditure of £10,000 for the Hokitika Harbour works was to be continued, because the general opinion was that, from the way in which the work was being carried out, the result was not likely to be of much good. There was a Harbour Board at Hokitika now, and they had an endowment; and was the House, under those circumstances, to be called upon to continue this vote?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said that there had been an expenditure of a little over £3,000 on this work, and, with the consent of the late Government, a contract had been let for some The Harbour Board had received £6,000. notice that it could not receive further sup-

plies.

Vote, £39,800, agreed to.

CLASS XI.—COLONIAL TREASURER. Charges and expenses of raising loans, £16,500, agreed to.

Resolutions reported to the House. Mr. FITZHERBERT had omitted to ask for an explanation of the sum of £4,009 for Would the Minister for harbour defences.

Public Works explain this item?
Mr. E. RICHARDSON said part of the amount was in connection with the torpedo boats which had been brought out, and the remainder was for survey of sites for forts.

Resolutions to be considered at next sitting.

The House adjourned at ten minutes to one o'clock a.m.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, 7th November, 1884.

First Reading — A. te Kairangi — Railways Authorization Bill—Native Land Alienation Restriction Bill—Special Powers and Contracts Bill—Westland Education District Subdivision Bill.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READING. Greymouth Harbour Board Bill (No. 2).

A. TE KAIRANGI.

On the motion of the Hon, Mr. J. C. RICH-MOND, it was ordered, That the report of the Native Affairs Committee on the petition of Atanatiu te Kairangi be printed and referred to the Government.

RAILWAYS AUTHORIZATION BILL. The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—The object of this Bill is to enable the Government to enter into contracts for the construction of certain railways named in the schedule. As to the first—a branch line from the main line of the Whangarei-Kamo Railway to the Whauwhau Colliery—before any contract is entered into for the making of the line the persons interested will have to pay the cost into the Public Ac-

count, or an approved guarantee must be given by some bank. As to the next line, a branch line across the Waikato River at Huntley, a special provision is made regarding it. Before any contract is made for the construction of the line the local company has to bind itself to send not less than 20,000 tons of coal: per annum by the railway for a period of not less than ten years, and the company will also pay a royalty of a certain amount per ton on the coal. The next important provision is that the Bill is to be deemed a special Act under "The Public Works Act, 1882." The 9th clause, as honourable members will observe, is merely of a permissive character. In Committee I shall propose one or two amendments, but none of an important nature. The Bill is one of a simple character, and I ask the Council to allow it to be read a second time.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE .- Will the honourable gentleman favour the Council with the estimated cost of the railways he has re-

ferred to?

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I have notthe information before me. Whatever may be the cost of the Whauwhau line, the amount, or an approved guarantee for it, has first to be

provided.

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—I should like some information as to clause 7—" Branch line from Wairio to Township of Nightcaps to beworked under 'The Public Works Act, 1882.'" I know the country very well, and under that clause the line may be made for about twelve miles through private property. We do not know whether or not permission for that has been got from the owners, and great injustice may be done under that clause. I think we should have more information in regard to it.

Bill read a second and a third time.

### NATIVE LAND ALIENATION RESTRIC-TION BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 8.—Dealings with land in Schedule prohibited.

The Hon. Mr. REEVES moved, That the words "within the territory described in the Schedule to this Act" be erased.

The Committee divided on the question, That the words be retained."

AYES, 19.

Acland Dignan Pollen Barnicoat Grace Reynolds Richmond, J.C. Bonar Hart Brandon Johnson, G. R. Scotland Buckley, G. Johnston, Buckley, P. A. Pharazyn . Johnston, J. Waterhouse Williamson. Chamberlin

Noes, 7.

Fraser Ngatata Peter Kohere Peacock Reeves. Lahmann

Majority for, 12.

Amendment negatived. Bill reported, and read a third time. On the motion, That the Bill do pass, The Hon. Mr. MANTELL said, -Sir, I

stated, when the Bill was in Committee, that it was my intention, on the motion for its third reading, to move its recommittal, with a view to altering clause 3, and to making another amendment further on. It was not, however, with any expectation of those amendments being carried that I proposed to take that action, but to give honourable gentlemen who desire to do so an opportunity of recording their votes in favour of making the measure applicable to the whole colony. But, the question having been brought forward and voted on in Committee, I abstain from again dividing the Council on the Bill.

Bill passed.

### SPECIAL POWERS AND CONTRACTS BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

- Schedule.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE moved, That paragraph 23—purchase of Provincial Buildings, Wellington, by Government Insurance Association—be erased.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the paragraph be retained."

AYES, 12.

Acland Buckley, P. A. Lahmann Bonar Dignan Peacock Brandon Fraser Reeves Buckley, G. Kohere Reynolds.

Noes, 13.

Barnicoat Mantell Pollen Chamberlin McLean Waterhouse Grace Williamson Peter Hart Wilson. Pharazyn Johnston, J.

Majority against, 1.

Paragraph struck out.

Bill reported, with amendment.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—I beg to move, That the Bill be recommitted, with the view of reinserting paragraph 23 of the schedule.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—I trust my honourable friend will not proceed with the motion, and I am sure that, on reconsideration, he will see that such a course is not in accordance with our usual practice, and is not calculated to promote the despatch of business. This clause was considered in a larger Council than we have now. Twenty-five members voted upon the motion for the retention of the clause, and there are now only twenty-one members present—four less than voted this afternoon. Now, I do not know whether my honourable friend has taken steps to secure a majority or not, but I am sure the effect on the minds of honourable members will be that they will consider that the Government are not taking the most worthy course to secure the passage of the Bill in accordance with their views. I think the better course, and the ordinary parliamentary course, would be that the Bill should be sent to the other House in the shape in which it now stands, and in another place it would be quite competent for the Government to move that the amendment | read a third time.

be not accepted; and then it would come back to us in the regular course and be considered upon its merits here, and there could be no possible objection to the result of a division taken under such circumstances. But there would be a feeling of soreness left in the minds of honourable members if, in a smaller House than that which voted on the excision of the clause this afternoon, the Government should now manage to effect a reversal of that deci-

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I am sorry to differ from the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse in regard to the action that is being taken in this matter. We are not taking that course with the intention of snatching a decision; but the position is this, and it is well that it should be perfectly understood by the Council: The money—£20,000, I think—has been actually paid; we have the money, and the Insurance Department has nothing whatever for it, and we wish to give them the land for it. If the Council wish to place the Government and the country in a false position, on them be the responsibility. I am quite prepared to submit to the decision of the Council at any time; but I think myself that wisdom would dictate action the other way. My honourable friend Mr. Waterhouse suggests that, by taking the course we propose, we should delay business. I do not agree with him, for this reason: Though we have a smaller House now than we had this afternoon, we are much more likely to have a still smaller House to-morrow, and in that case this important Bill could not be considered with so much facility as it can be now. That is my reason for wishing to bring the matter on now. If the Council decides against me, I must submit; but I think honourable members will see that the best course to take under the circumstances is the one we propose. I may also state that there is one honourable gentleman who would have voted in favour of the clause this afternoon, but happened to be outside, and, not thinking it a matter of importance, did not come in. If he had voted there would have been a tie, and then, I believe, the Chairman would have given his casting vote in favour of the clause, as that would have been the usual course.

The Hon. Mr. HENDERSON.—I beg to say that I should have voted for the clause had I been here, but I was at the Hutt.

The Council divided.

AYES, 14. Baillie Dignan Reeves Bonar Reynolds Fraser Brandon Henderson Richmond, J. C. Buckley, G. Lahmann Williamson.

Buckley, P. A. Peacock

Noes, 9. Johnson, G. R. Barnicoat Scotland Chamberlin Mantell Waterhouse Grace Pollen Wilson.

Majority for, 5.

Motion agreed to. Bill amended in Committee, reported, and The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—I move, That the resolution arrived at by the Waste Lands Committee when considering the Special Powers and Contracts Bill be forwarded to the Native Minister.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—I second

the motion.

Motion made, and question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this Council, the rehearing by the Native Land Court of the case relating to the ownership of the block of land known as Haurutu should be before Judges other than those who have already adjudicated on the case."—(Hon. Mr. Wilson.)

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—Before that is put, one would like to learn something more of the case. I have heard it stated that no less than four times has this case been before the Judges. If that is so, I should really like

some information upon it.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY. - It has

been heard three times.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—Then, it is proposed that it should be heard a fourth time; and I think that is absurd. I have no knowledge of what the circumstances of the case are; but, if you are going to open up a case time after time, where is it to end? Surely, when a case has been adjudicated upon three times, that is enough. The Government have the power in their own hands, and it is for them to take the responsibility on themselves, and I think we should not place any restriction on their action.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.—I think the action the Council is recommended to take is one of very doubtful propriety. I think neither the Council in its individual capacity, nor the Legislature as a whole, should interfere directly with the jurisdiction of Courts, unless circumstances occur, such as certainly have not presented themselves to my mind, which would make interference necessary for the removal of a Judge or Judges. I have what I may venture to call a superstitious disinclination to even point my finger in the way of condemnation at a Court of justice. I desire to surround it with all the respect and confidence the community can bestow upon it, for it is the protection of society. I think it would be sufficient that this resolution has been reported to the Council, to induce the Government, without any formal resolution of the Council condemnatory of the Judges-which this really is-to see that a sense of propriety, if nothing else, may induce the Native Land Court to adopt the course recommended by the resolution.

The Council divided on the question, "That the resolution be agreed to."

AYES, 8.

Baillie Fraser Waterhouse Barnicoat Reynolds Wilson. Dignan Richmond, J.C.

Nors, 8.

Buckley, P.A. Lahmann
Grace McLean
Johnson, G.R. Peacock

Pollen
Williamson.

The Hon. the SPEAKER gave his casting vote with the "Ayes."

Motion agreed to.

WESTLAND EDUCATION DISTRICT SUBDIVISION BILL.

The Council proceeded to consider the reasons of the House of Representatives for disagreeing with the amendments made by the Council in this Bill.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—I move, That the Council doth not insist upon its amend-

ments.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—I do not think the course proposed is a very creditable one-to reverse to-day a decision arrived at yesterday. I have not had much experience in such matters, but I think it possible that some in-fluence with which I am not acquainted may have been used to induce members to change their opinions. I yesterday stated my reasons for thinking that the Bill should unquestionably not pass in the shape it was in when before the Council. I am quite aware that it has been agreed to in another place, without a division, to-day; but there is no question that that House is moved by influences which do not exist here. I do not think that what was done deliberately and carefully one day should be overridden the next, without any reason. If it had been shown by the honourable gentleman opposite that we had arrived at a hasty or wrong decision, we should be quite ready to reconsider it; but the honourable gentleman has not given a single argument why we should reverse that decision. I suppose that, practically, something has happened, and that honourable gentlemen who said this was a good measure yesterday are prepared to say to-day that it is a bad one. I do not think such a course would reflect credit either on the Council or on the Government, and I shall oppose the motion.

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.—I hope the Council will insist on its amendments. The general interests of the education of the children of the colony are paramount, and should be paramount everywhere, to local considerations. We well know, and it has been officially stated in evidence before the Committee which considered this matter, that, owing to the present exceptional circumstances of the Westland District in regard to educational matters, it was impossible that, under local management, the expenditure could be kept within any regular standard; and the Committee was informed, on the highest authority—the information was not volunteered, but was, so to speak, dragged out of the high official who superintends the Education Department - that the great object of carrying out properly the provisions of the Education Act in the Westland District could be effected much more completely, much more economically, and much more to the advantage of the people of the district by a Commission to be appointed by the Crown than by any Education Board that would, under the present circumstances of the district, be elected. I do not want to use any

strong language, or raise any discussion that ! might have an unpleasant turn; but I think myself that the desire of the Legislature must be to have the provisions of the Education Act carried out to the best possible advantage in every district, and that the advantages of the education system should be extended throughout the colony in the best possible way. Having appointed a Committee that has fully considered the subject, and having decided that the best possible course as to this particular district is to make an alteration in the administration of educational affairs there, I think the Council should not be turned, by any consideration of a personal character, from the course which it has adopted in this case.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—I am sure it would be more satisfactory to the Council if the Hon. Mr. Reynolds had given some reason why he wishes to reverse the decision at which we have arrived. No doubt my honourable friend has considered the subject fully, because he was a member of the Committee to whom the Bill was referred, and was a party to the report adopted by the Committee; but, apparently, since the Committee met yesterday morning, he has changed his opinion upon the subject, and it would be very satisfactory to us to know the reasons which led to this change in his opinion. The question under considera-tion is one of very considerable importance. The extravagance and maladministration of the Westland Board were perfectly demonstrated. The Government frequently called their attention to their actions; but no heed was paid to the remonstrances of the Government, and, as a result, the Government had to step in and pay some £5,000 to make up the deficiency in the accounts of the Board. Now, is it to be tolerated that a local body should incur this illegal expenditure without some mark of the reprobation of the Legislature? reprobation of the Legislature? Are we to allow these things to go unvisited? I think the extent to which we have gone in showing our disapprobation of the proceedings of the Board of that district justifiable. We must simply say this to the district: "You have shown your unfitness to manage your educational affairs with care and propriety; the cause of education has suffered at your hands; the expenses of the establishment have been much greater than they should have been, and no economy exists. We will take over the education of your district for a limited period. We will place there one of our officers, whose in-structions shall be limited to expending the revenue; and, when we have put things on a proper basis and have restored the equilibrium in your finance, then we will hand back to you the administration of education in your district." The effect of this will simply be to defer any final action to be taken until another session, when I have no doubt Parliament will accede to the request for the division of the district which has been made by at least one portion of the district. But it appears to me we should be giving a premium to recklessness, a premium to local Boards to disregard the duties devolving on them, and to disregard | for their past illegal action, they decline to

the remonstrances of the Government at their proceedings, if we did not by our action now show our disapprobation of the conduct of this

Board in the past.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND.—Any change that has come over my opinion in the interval since we last voted on this question has been in this direction: that I am much more firmly convinced of the necessity for the action we took. If I had wanted anything to convince me we were right, it has been supplied in the opinions expressed out of doors on our action. A number of gentlemen have spoken to me in a confidential way on the subject, and every one has expressed satisfaction with the result. I say it is due to the nine Boards who have done their duty, and have, at all times, economically and wisely administered the Act, that we should make our opinion in this one case unmistakably known. It is not the least slight upon any other part of the administration of the education system, but, on the contrary, it is a vote of confidence in other Boards, that we at once take up a thing of this kind. It is plainly evident that the whole of the argument as to the incompatibility of the different parts of the district, and one thing and the other, is mere idle words. There is nothing exceptional in the configuration of the district, and there is no reason why the administration of the Act should be more difficult there than elsewhere. As to the alleged extra expense, that was a difficulty easily to be cured if the Board had taken the proper course. I do not believe that that was the cause of the mischief. The mischief was radical. If the Government puts educational affairs on the West Coast on a proper footing we shall see what the really necessary cost of schools there is. Until that is done we cannot arrive at a knowledge of what the cost of administering the Education Act in the district is, and until that is done no additional vote should be given. The last thing that the Legislature should do is to give such a vote before it has learned from an impartial authority what the really legitimate cost of education there is. I cannot possibly agree with the course proposed by my honourable friend Mr. Reynolds.

The Hon. Mr. G. BUCKLEY.—I understand that the effect of the Council insisting on its amendments would be that the schools on the West Coast would be closed during at least twelve months, and there would be no educa-tion there at all.—(No.)—I understand that it may lead to that state of things; and of course that would be a serious consideration.

An Hon. MEMBER.—The schools would be carried on by the Government, as they are

The Hon. Mr. G. BUCKLEY.—If the schools would be carried on by the Government, where is there any necessity for this Bill?

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—Because they want the money spent there. That is the reason.

The Hon. Mr. BONAR.—No; I object to that. Unless the Government are indemnified

carry on education there any longer. If Parliament thinks it is not necessary to carry on education in Westland, passing this Bill in its amended form will practically express that I say the Government has distinctly stated it is not prepared to go on administering education on the West Coast in a hand-tomouth way any more. I do think the reasons assigned by the House for disagreeing with the amendments of the Council are good and sub-stantial ones. It has been said that the Council arrived at its decision after careful and deliberate consideration. That careful and deliberate consideration was confined to the space of one hour. What was the careful and deliberate consideration bestowed on the same measure a year before? The Council then came almost unanimously to the conclusion that the only remedy for the educational difficulties of the West Coast was that the district should be divided. How has the Council altered its opinion now so suddenly, in the course of a forenoon? I say that even a greater necessity exists now for the division of the district than existed twelve months ago. The system of education on the West Coast has been carried on under the greatest possible disadvantages. Under the system of administration by the Government there has been a very serious loss. A number of people interested in education there have, at the earnest request of the Government, sought to co-operate with them, and have tried to make the best of their difficulty. Members of the School Committees have tried their best to help the Government in carrying on education in the place, so much so that I know many School Committeemen have put their hands into their own pockets to pay for firewood, lighting, and other things. Now, I say if you pass the Bill as amended you will take the whole heart out of these men, whose real interest is in the system of education. - (No.) - I say so advisedly. Since the Council passed the Bill I have had telegrams without number from these very men, who have taken a most lively interest in the system of education. I say they will not work under the system you propose. They not work under the system you propose. protest against it, and say they are perfectly able to carry on if they are only left alone. No one could denounce more strongly than I do the action taken in the past by a few members of the Board, which led to all the trouble; but, I ask, are the good members of the Board to be kept tied down, and the community to be kept tied down, for the action of those men who have done all the mischief? Is it fair to the children of the district that they should suffer for the conduct of the men who, by their action, closed the schools, and kept them closed for a fortnight at a time, because there were not the funds to pay the teachers and to supply what were absolutely the school re-quisites? Parliament having decided last year that the district ought to be separated, are we now to be forced by the Legislature into having our educational affairs administered by a Commission? How can they be better ad-ministered by Commissioners than by local

School Committees? The Commissioners are not liable to any one at all but the Government; whereas the members of the Board are amenable to the public, and the public, after the experience of the past, are not going to return members to that Board who will not do what is right. I say we have a right to what we ask, and I do not think the Legislature ought to be the means of depriving us of that right. It is wrong in principle, and the circumstances do not warrant it at all. As to the question of expense, we are told that the Board can only continue to carry on the administration at a loss. Well, I say, if the Board would carry it on at a loss, it could not be carried on by Commissioners at a profit; but, from a careful examination of the finances of the different Boards, I feel perfectly satisfied the system can be carried on by the Boards at a cost within the revenue; and, as far as the Grey District is concerned, it can; by the exercise of due economy, be carried on without a loss. It will necessitate a considerable curtailment of the present expenses. But these expenses were gone to without suffi-cient warrant, and things must simply be al-lowed to come back to their normal state—to the state that they must live within their income; and that they can do perfectly well. I will take this opportunity of saying that those representatives of the district who were very strongly opposed to the original Bill in the other House, are not opposed now to allowing the Bill to pass in the form in which it came to this Council. I understand the members to say so, and I think that ought to be the best guarantee for the passage of the Bill. I may also say that, if it is insisted on by the Council that those districts shall be administered by Commissioners, local feeling will not be allayed. If the Bill is passed it will allow two districts, which it is admitted on all hands cannot agree, to have their own Boards, with their own responsibilities and their own revenues; and they know perfectly well that they must live within their revenue. Local feeling would be allayed; and, if it be thought desirable that the whole of the West Coast should be amalgamated into one, which is the real object, hereafter there will be no difficulty about it. Unless the people of the district are allowed to have self-government, to have Education Boards—even though they are under the control of men who have not acted as they ought to have done - the feeling will be intensified, the cause of education will suffer, and upon the children of the districts the misfortune will fall. I would ask the Council to reconsider the matter, and to give to the people of the locality what they wish. There is no part of the colony in which more experiments have been tried than Westland. We were a county when everywhere else there were provinces. We were turned back into a province; and yet we were able to hold our own right through, and to do the colony good service too. We had to establish our own form of government, and to make one that this Legislature could not decide upon. In the matter of this Board, we ought to be left to govern ourselves; we ought to be left to go on with a fixed income,

Hon. Mr. Bonar

and we can and will live within it; and the Legislature will have no cause to complain of any action taken, but the Council will find that we shall give satisfaction to the public, and do

good to the colony.

The Hon. Mr. BARNICOAT.—The Council has not yet been told what are the amendments to which our concurrence is invited. I understand that the Bill is much in the same stage as it was originally sent here, and that the real question at issue is, whether the administration of education in Westland is to be by a Commission or not, or under the regular mode, by an Education Board. I express the same opinion now as I did yesterday, that we should be doing the Westland people a very great ininstice indeed by taking from them the administration of education. I see no good reason for doing so. The Hon. Mr. Waterhouse presumed that the next Education Board, if elected, would behave in the same extravagant fashion as the last Board. I can see no reason for that presumption whatever—that it will go on in the same way. The fair presumption is that it will behave as other Boards do. The punishment is altogether too severe upon the whole district. The Hon. Dr. Pollen has said that the Commission would administer education much more cheaply. I have no doubt about that. The same might be said of every Board in the country-that a Commission would administer its affairs a great deal more cheaply than the Board does. A Commission is cheaper than a large Board selected by the people; but that is the price to be paid for liberty. I should be very sorry indeed if the people of Westland were punished in the severe way in which this Council asks to punish them. If a Road Board conducts itself extravagantly, we do not immediately take away from that district the large powers it possesses. It is the same with regard to City Councils, or other local bodies. The immediate result is not the removal of the power which they P088e88.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND. — Suspen-

The Hon. Mr. BARNICOAT.—That is temporary removal. I think we shall do well by concurring with the amendments of the other House.

The Hon. Mr. G. R. JOHNSON.—I must say I am not surprised that the Council has reviewed its decision of last year, seeing that during the past year the action on the part of the Education Board was certainly very far from judicious or right. This is a very large district, and in considering the case last year we came to the conclusion that it was desirable to divide the district, and now it seems to me that these circumstances are by no means altered, but rather intensified. There is greater reason for division now than existed last year. If this Bill is passed in the form in which it came to the Council, the arrangement for subdivision passed last year will be done away with. It seems to me that the Hokitika District may fairly be allowed to manage its own affairs under an Education Board, and that the other

part of the district should be placed in the hands of a Commissioner. There is another alternative, namely, that the district should be divided, and a Commissioner appointed to each part. But it seems to me that the affairs of the two portions of the district, under any circumstances, should be kept apart. As far as I can gather, the wrong-doing is due to action on the part of members drawn from one portion of the district. They have accumulated into their own hands the entire power exercised by the Board, and have exercised that power in a manner we cannot approve of. Under these circumstances, I think it would be better to maintain that portion of the Bill which recognizes the subdivision of the district, so that the affairs of the two portions may be adminis-tered separately; and I should be willing to vote for the appointment of an Education Board in the Hokitika District. At the same time, I think the recommendation with regard

to Greymouth is perfectly right.

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—I think any Government must be weak that would put up with the levying of blackmail which the Education Board of Greymouth have attempted. They refused to open the election papers, and said, "You shall not do this unless you are prepared to pay our debts." Any Government that would put up with this would not be fit to have the affairs of the colony intrusted to it. I think some difference ought to be made between the two divisions. I should have no objection to see one Commissioner for the southern district, and another for the north. I do not think these two districts will ever agree. The Hokitika people, in my opinion, have managed their affairs very well indeed. The Greymouth people have shown that they are unworthy to be trusted. I think it would be well if a compromise can be come to to separate the southern and northern portions of the district. The southern people should be glad to accept a Commission. Therefore I insist that we stand to our amendments. move, That the Council insist on their amendments, but give way to this extent: to allow two Commissioners, one for Hokitika and the other for Greymouth. I do not think it is right we should associate the southern with the northern part of Westland.

The Hon. Dr. GRACE.—It ought to be remembered that the system of education of the colony is on its trial, and I am not at all sure that this is not a good opportunity for the Council to insist upon its amendments, so as to discover whether, by the administra-tion of these Commissioners, the efficiency of the system can be maintained at a less cost than otherwise. The whole discussion has this lesson for me: that administrative bodies are invariably corrupted by a profuse expenditure. I cannot forget that the Westland education system formerly was most creditable to the district, and was the most successful system in operation in the colony. It was inexpensively and locally administered in the interests of all classes of the community. It appears to me that those local bodies in Westland, which

displayed very exceptional powers for economical administration, have been spoiled by the sudden prosperity which the flood of colonial money directed towards them created. The former system of education in Westland was simply this: All schools were aided by the County of Westland by contributions in aid, and all the schools were prosperously and beneficially conducted, until this state of things was altered by the Education Act with the profuse expenditure of public money thence I do not believe it possible that resulting. we can continue this immense expenditure through the instrumentality of Education Boards, and I shall certainly vote in favour of the Council insisting upon its amendments, were it purely for the sake of aiming at simplicity of administration, cheapness, and efficiency of management.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.-I have taken no part in the debate on this Bill, but I do think that the Council could not well depart from the position it has taken up. It is quite impossible to overlook the manner in which the administration of the Education Act has been brought into disrepute in this case, and I think something is necessary in order to mark our disapprobation of it; and, without saying more, I would suggest that the Council should certainly insist on its amendments in the Bill.

Amendment, That the Council insist on its amendments, agreed to.

The Council adjourned at twenty-five minutes past eleven o'clock p.m.

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Friday, 7th November, 1884.

First Readings—Second Readings—Third Readings

—Hansard—Hunterville—Under-Secretary, Law
and Justice—Middle Island Crown Lands—
Minister of Native Race—Lawrence Railwaystation—Grey County Waste Lands—Greymouth
Supreme Court—Westland Education—A. Russell—Reporting Debates Committee—RailwayFences—Sheep and Cattle Rates—R. Tuta and
Others—Upper Takaka Telephone—Wairau Protective Works—Makaraka Telephone—Mahia
Lineman—Railway Employes Holidays—Charttable Aid—"The King Country"—Berwick-Henley
Telephone—Hospital and Charitable Aid—Native
Land Purchases—Mail Service with England—
Coroners—Greymouth—Brunner Railway Fares
—Brunner and Grey Bridges—Westport Collery
Company—Auckland—Wellington Telegraph—
Westland Education District Subdivision Bill—
Fisheries Conservation Bill—River Boards Bill
—Greymouth Harbour Board Bill (No. 2)—Native
Land Alienation Restriction Bill.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER took the chair at halfpast two o'clock.

Prayers.

FIRST READINGS.

Appropriation Bill, Immigration and Public Works Appropriation Bill.

### SECOND READINGS.

Animals Protection Bill, Sheep Bill, Salmon and Trout Bill, Appropriation Bill, Immigra-tion and Public Works Appropriation Bill.

Hon. Dr. Grace

THIRD READINGS.

Animals Protection Bill, Sheep Bill, Salmon and Trout Bill, Wellington College Reserves Confirmation Bill. .

HANSARD.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD brought up the follow-

ing report:

'The Reporting Debates and Printing Committee have the honour to report that they have had under consideration a proposal for a daily issue of Hansard, the reports of speeches to be in the third person, and condensed under proper editorial supervision; extended reports of speeches of members desiring to be reported in extenso to be published as an appendix at the end of the session: but, while the plan proposed would have many recommendations, the Committee find that to carry it into effect would be attended by considerable difficulty, and they are unable to recommend the proposal for adoption.

"With a view to adding to the facilities of the reporting staff they have decided to make a trial of the 'Caligraph,' as used in America and elsewhere, and have sanctioned the ordering of four of these instruments, which will be available for use at next session of Parliament.

"The Committee have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the efficient manner in which the Hansard staff have carried out their duties during the session, and to the general accuracy of the reports taken.

"The Committee desire to call the attention of the House to the fact that some of the numerous returns ordered this session have been of a very costly nature (as, for example, Return H.-53, the cost of preparing which is given as about £75), and suggest that some means should be taken to insure that the House should be made aware of the approxi-mate cost of any return moved for, prior to the return being ordered. Appended is a list of the several papers and returns which the Committee has ordered to be printed, viz. :—B.-57. D.-43, D.-49, G.-21, G.-22, H.-35, H.-55, H.-78, H.-79."

HUNTERVILLE.

Mr. BRUCE asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether he will give directions to metal the formed streets in the Township of Hunterville, such township being still Government property, and such streets being almost impassable? Although no sections had been sold in this township, three stores had already been erected to supply a large district, which was rapidly becoming settled.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON was not aware, seeing there were no sections sold in the township, that there were any buildings erected there. The reply which he had to make to the honourable gentleman was that the Government did not consider that it was their duty to form and

metal the streets in any township.

UNDER-SECRETARY, LAW AND JUS-TICE.

Mr. SAMUEL asked the Minister of Justice.

Whether the Government intend to fill the vacancy of Under-Secretary to the Law and Justice Department? He was quite sure that the Minister of Justice would immediately recognize the necessity of appointing a qualified gentleman to fill this important office.

Lawrence

Mr. TOLE replied that this question would receive attention when the subject of the reorganization of the Civil Service came under

consideration.

### MIDDLE ISLAND CROWN LANDS.

Mr. BROWN asked the Minister of Lands, If he will cause a description of all Crown lands offered for sale in the Middle Island to be advertised in the same manner as lands within the Auckland Land District, New Zealand Gazette No. 115, page 1498, 23rd October, 1884? If this suggestion were carried out, it would be a very great public convenience. It would give information to intending purchasers of land which could not possibly be given otherwise, and would save people many useless journeys. For the information of the House he would read an announcement from the Gazette such as he wished to be published with regard to Middle Island lands:—

"Description of Land.—Lots 23 and 23A, 35 acres rush swamp, balance open forn land, good fall to swamp for draining all the fern land, ploughable, section is close to main Waipipi-Waiuku Road; 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 32, and 33, all open fern land, almost level, next to above; 29, 30, 34, and 35, open fern and tea-tree, quite level, and partially fenced, next to above."

He merely read this to show to the House

He merely read this to show to the House that sufficient information was not given to intending purchasers; and he hoped that the Government would make the necessary change in the way of advertising the lands for sale.

Mr. BALLANCE saw no objection to carrying out the honourable gentleman's recommendation, and instructions would be given accordingly.

### MINISTER OF NATIVE RACE.

Mr. TAIAROA asked the Native Minister, Whether it is the intention of the Government to appoint a Minister or Ministers of the Native race, as authorized by the existing law?

Mr. BALLANCE had to say that the subject was under the consideration of the Government.

#### LAWRENCE RAILWAY-STATION.

Mr. BROWN asked the Minister for Public Works, If he will cause inquiries to be made with the view of providing suitable passenger and other public accommodation at the Lawrence Railway-station? He wished to draw the attention of the Minister for Public Works to this question. The honourable gentleman had not been long in office, and he hoped to see him very shortly in the district, and then the Minister would see the necessity for the question he had put. The Lawrence station was the terminus of the line, and was largely used by passengers. During the three or four months of the winter season people coming

long distances to eatch the train arrived twenty minutes or more before the starting of the train, and there was scarcely any shelter for them. Women and children coming long distances were thus exposed to the elements; and, apart from that, there was no accommodation suitable for the business of the town at the station. He hoped that such facilities would be provided as might be considered necessary.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON would undertake to

inquire into the matter.

### GREY COUNTY WASTE LANDS.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Minister of Mines, Whether the Government will repeal the regulations now in force in the Westland Land District for depasturing cattle on waste lands of the Crown, so far as such regulations are in operation in the Grey County? He might explain that his reason for asking the question was this: Part of the Grey County was situated within the Westland Land District, and twothirds of it in the Land District of Nelson. Charges were made upon all cattle depasturing upon Crown lands in the Westland Land District, whereas in the Nelson District no charges were made. It was thought unfair that charges should be made in one part and not in the other. He simply asked that the regulation making a charge in one part should be repealed, or, if not repealed, that powers should be given to the Grey County Council, under the Mines Act, to make regulations which would be uniform, the same as had been done in regard to the Tuapeka County Council.

Mr. BALLANCE said the Government recognized that there was an inequality, and it was desirable there should be uniformity in the matter. The subject would be inquired into, and such alterations made as were necessary.

### GREYMOUTH SUPREME COURT.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Government, Whether they will, during the recess, make inquiries with a view of taking the nocessary steps to have Supreme Court sittings held at Greymouth? The sittings of the Court at Hokitika necessitated people who had business there travelling from the Inangahua and Grey Counties to Hokitika, and a great deal of the work came from the counties he had named. He thought that when inquiries were made it would be seen that there was a necessity for having periodical sittings at Greymouth and Hokitika alternately.

Mr. TOLE could not say anything further than that he would make inquiries into the matter.

### WESTLAND EDUCATION.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Minister of Education,—(1.) If it is true that, owing to there being no Education Boards in Westland and Grey Education Districts, no examination of candidates for the granting of scholarships has taken place? (2.) Will the Government set aside the moneys so saved for extra scholarships, and arrange that those pupils who were eligible

this year shall have the right to compete, notwithstanding they may be over age at the date of the examination? The reason why he asked the question was this: that, owing to there being no Board, the scholarships had lapsed, and others had not been established. An injustice had been done to the children in the district this year who were in a position to compete, but who now, being fifteen years of age, would not be in that position, unless the Government took the necessary steps to grant this concession.

Mr. STOUT said it was quite true that no scholarships had been awarded to the Westland District since the 1st of April of this year. The reason of that was that, owing to the exceptional circumstances in which matters were, the Minister of Education thought it would be inadvisable to deal with the matter. As to the second question, the honourable member was aware that there was a certain proportion of money voted for scholarships, and he (Mr. Stout) apprehended that these moneys would be strictly applied to the purposes for which they were voted.

### A. RUSSELL.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Government, What steps they intend to take to settle the claim of Albert Russell, of the Waikato Regiment, for land promised on his transfer from the regulars to this troop; and what steps the Government intend to take in dealing with and finally settling other numerous claims of a similar nature? Each year of the session a number of petitions came to the House from soldiers who had done service during the Waikato war. Mr. Russell was enlisted in Melbourne. At the time of his enlistment it was held out to him that he would receive fifty acres of land. After three or four months' service, having proved himself a splendid officer, an officer from a Waikato regiment was sent to ask him and others to join the Waikatos, and a promise was given by that officer that the number of acres of land would be increased, and that they would stand in the same position as they did on the first enlistment. Mr. Russell joined on He did service for a lengththis inducement. ened period, and he had since repeatedly petitioned the House for his land. It was said that he had lost his claim to the fifty acres granted under the first enlistment, and received nothing for the service that was done. A letter was presented with the petition from the officer who enlisted him, in which the statement was borne out that this pledge had been given to Mr. Russell at the time of enlistment, and that the gentleman enlisting him was at that time authorized by the commanding officer to hold out this inducement, with full power to give effect to it. There were others in the same position. He thought engagements of this kind should not be repudiated.

Mr. BALLANCE thought there was some mistake with regard to this case. It was true that, in regard to Russell's case, the Committee reported, in 1883, that there was no reason

Mr. Seddon

list of applicants whose claims were to be considered; and he also petitioned again this year, when evidence was given that the name did not appear in the records or books of the Wai-kato Regiment at all. There was evidently some mistake in the matter. If Russell never was in the Waikatos, he had no claim whatever. He (Mr. Ballance) could only say, generally, with regard to the question, that the Government had already stated in the present session that the whole of these claims would be taken into consideration during the recess, and the Government would make a recommendation to the House next session.

Mr. SEDDON said there must be a serious mistake in this matter, for Captain Morris, the honourable member for Tauranga, knew Russell well, and that he had served in his regiment; and his commanding officer sent a letter to the effect that he had enlisted him, and that he had served under him for a number of years.

Mr. BALLANCE said he could only refer to the evidence given by the Defence Department before the Committee, after search was made through the records, and Russell's name did not appear there.

### REPORTING DEBATES COMMITTEE.

Mr. W. J. STEWARD asked the Government, If they will give effect to the recommendation of the Reporting Debates Committee, as contained in Interim Report No. 4, by providing the sum of £81 for special allowance to Hansard compositors, in consideration of the double session of this year? A memorandum from Mr. Didsbury had accompanied the report, but the recommendation of the Committee reached the Government too late to have the amounts included in the supplementary estimates.

Mr. STOUT said the Government got no notice of the £81 until after the supplementary estimates had been prepared, and sanctioned by the Governor. He had no doubt arrangements would be made to pay it out of "Unauthorized."

### RAILWAY FENCES.

Mr. PEARSON asked the Minister for Publ Works, If the Railway Department considers itself bound by law to cut and trim the live fences along the railway-lines and reserves, so as to prevent the same damaging the neighbouring lands; and, if it does not, will the department frame regulations for the purpose of having such fences cut yearly? He had received a letter from some of his constituents along the railway-line with regard to this matter, and he thought that if the Railway Department did not undertake to keep these fences trimmed a considerable injustice would be done. In

"Mr. O'CALLAGHAN asked the Governmen Whether they are aware that it has been contended by the solicitor to the Public Works Department in Christchurch, in a case in the Magistrate's Court, that the Crown is not bound by the Fencing Ordinance in the matter of railway fences; and that the Bench found that it had to uphold such contention? In the case why his name should not be placed upon the | to which the question referred, a double line

[HOUSE.]

of fence had been taken by the department through a man's land, and it was argued by the solicitor to the department that the maintenance of both these fences devolved upon the settler, who therefore became responsible for the trespass of cattle and sheep upon the railway line. A great hardship had undoubtedly been inflicted in that case, and he wished to know whether the law was to be allowed to remain in its present state.

"Mr. W. W. JOHNSTON said his attention had been called that morning to the decision of the Bench in regard to this particular case, and since then he had asked the Law Officers of the Crown to give him their opinion upon the subject, but he had not yet received that opinion. As to the question generally of maintaining railway fences, he believed the Government would have to take charge of the maintenance of all the fences. He confessed that, after giving the matter considerable thought, he could come to no other conclusion."

There was no doubt as to the liability of the Government in this matter, and he hoped the Minister for Public Works would give an answer in the affirmative to the question.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the Government were only to become responsible where specific arrangements were made for the acquisition of land for railway purposes.

### SHEEP AND CATTLE RATES.

Mr. PEARSON asked the Government, If they intend taking any steps to relieve the Districts of Napier, Canterbury, and Otago of such portion of the sheep rate as is not required to pay for the administration of the Sheep Act in those districts, and if they will take steps to impose a rate on cattle-owners by way of contribution to the salaries of the officials who are Cattle Inspectors under the said Sheep Act? The Joint Committee on Sheep and Rabbit Acts had submitted a valuable report, from which he would read the following extract:-

"It will also be apparent, on reference to the annual sheep returns (H.-3, 1884, page 2), that, whilst the sheep rate in the Districts of Napier, Canterbury, and Otago, where there is no scab, exceeds the salaries paid to Inspectors by an aggregate sum of £4,029, the rate from the remaining districts, which are infected districts, falls short of the required amount by £3,010; and that, as the total sheep rate exceeds by £1,019 the total amount paid in salaries, it follows that the clean districts are contributing no less than £3,010 towards the expense of eradicating scab in the other districts, besides £1,019 towards the general revenue of the colony."

He thought that the people in those districts, who were energetic enough to get rid of the scab, should not be taxed to keep up Inspectors in districts where sufficient means had not been used to eradicate the scab. It appeared that a portion of the rates derived went to pay the expenses of the Inspectors employed under the Act to look after cattle; and therefore the owners of cattle ought to pay a proportion of the rates levied.

Mr. STOUT said the honourable member was no doubt aware that this matter was mentioned in the Committee's report. The Government had to thank the Committee for the very valuable report they had furnished. The Committee, who were thoroughly conversant with the whole subject, had made no such recom-mendation as the honourable gentleman suggested, as to how this disparity in the revenue should be dealt with. It would be impossible to deal with one particular district unless the whole manner of administering the Sheep Act were changed, and that would involve fresh legislation. Therefore the Government could not at the present time take any steps with regard to the subject, and they must administer the law as it stood. They admitted the dis-parity, but they did not see how they could at present give any relief.

### R. TUTA AND OTHERS.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE asked the Premier, What steps, if any, the Government propose taking with regard to the report of the Native Affairs Committee on the petitions of Ruka Tuta and others and Ramari Herewini? He admitted that this was a large and important question, and involved very great difficulty. He would not enter into the merits of the question.

Mr. BALLANCE replied that this matter had been properly described as one of importance. It opened up the question of dealing with a number of trusts throughout the colony. The report of the Committee on the subject

was as follows:-"The Committee is of opinion that the condition of the trust has not been fulfilled, and that steps should be taken by the Government, either by an action in the Supreme Court or by legislation, to restore the piece of land in question to the condition of an ordinary Native reserve, under the management of the Public Trustee. As regards that part of the grant made out of Crown land, the Committee consider it should revert to the Crown.'

It was not the intention of the Government to take action in the Supreme Court. As to the question of legislation, that was a matter which would have to be considered. It was a question whether the conditions of many of these trusts had been fulfilled. The Government could not deal with any particular trust, but all trusts made in a similar way in various parts of the colony would have to be considered at the same time.

### UPPER TAKAKA TELEPHONE.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE asked the Commissioner of Telegraphs, Whether he will cause a telephone - station to be established at Bates's, Upper Takaka?

Sir J. VOGEL replied that the Government could not accede to this request: not upon the ground of expense, but because there was a public line connecting the offices at Motueka, Collingwood, and other places. If this request were granted, to make a private house a telephone-station, there were several other

private settlers along the line who might ask to be dealt with in the same way, and the effect would be that all public messages passing through would be heard through the telephone.

Mr. HURSTHOUSE had no desire that the station should be at a private house. There was a public school at this place, which was only a hundred yards from the present line. There were a considerable number of settlers living in the vicinity, to whom this telephonestation would be a great convenience.

Sir J. VOGEL said the officer of the department reported that only one settler would use the line, and that he would be able to hear all messages passing through. If these public telephone lines, which were really in the nature of telegraph lines, were allowed to be connected with private houses, the secrecy of messages would be destroyed.

### WAIRAU PROTECTIVE WORKS.

Mr. DODSON asked the Government, Whether they will cause an examination and report to be made upon the effectiveness of certain protective works which have been erected during the past eight years by the Lower Wairau Board of Conservators, for controlling the flood water and protecting the banks of rivers in the Wairau District; the system being very simple, easily erected, and comparatively inexpensive, merely consisting of posts, wire, and the plantation of willows, but which in every instance has been found satisfactory in protecting the river-banks? He might state that the Government were not asked to spend any money, but were simply requested to make a report on works of considerable importance already constructed. At one time there was no district in the colony more subject to floods than the Wairau District; but, owing to the protective works undertaken by the River Board, which were of a simple and inexpensive character, it was now free from floods, and was one of considerable prosperity. As there was no reason why the system adopted should not be made use of in other parts of the colony, he thought the Government should make an authoritative report, so as to lead to the adoption of the system in other places.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that the report asked for would be made during the recess.

### MAKARAKA TELEPHONE.

Mr. LOCKE asked the Government, Whether they will have a telephone-station opened at Makaraka, between Gisborne and Ormond, as it would be a great convenience to the inhabitants, and involve no expense, as the wire runs through the village?

Sir J. VOGEL replied that he would authorize the opening of a telephone-station at Makaraka. The expense would not be more than £45, and there would be no delay in having it done.

#### MAHLA LINEMAN.

Mr. LOCKE asked the Government, Whether they will station a lineman operator at the Sir J. Vogel

Mahia or thereabouts, being about half-way between Gisborne and Wairoa, great inconvenience now being felt through the delays caused by any breakage or disarrangement of the wire, the two main stations being so far apart and a very rough country intervening; and also as there is a considerable population of Europeans and Maoris in the neighbourhood of the Mahia, who would benefit by such an arrangement?

Sir J. VOGEL replied that the cost would be too heavy for the department to undertake. The interruptions were very frequent, but it was not considered necessary to have an operator in the neighbourhood.

## RAILWAY EMPLOYÉS' HOLIDAYS.

Mr. FITZHERBERT asked the Minister for Public Works, If it is his intention to give immediate effect to a resolution of this House of the 9th September last, respecting the holidays of railway employés; and, if so, will such railway employés receive a holiday on Monday next, the day on which the Prince of Wales's birthday will be celebrated?

birthday will be celebrated?
Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that it was the intention of the Government to give fair and reasonable effect to the resolution which the House passed, which was couched in these words: "That, in the opinion of this House, the railway employés should not be subjected to reduction of pay on account of statutory holidays." The question involved a very con-siderable amount of difficulty in making the arrangements, and he had not had time to spare during the session to consult the General Managers of the railways as to these arrangements. The holiday that suited in one place would not suit in another. In regard to the Hutt District, he understood that next Monday would be suitable for some of the men; but in Canterbury the men would not be at all satisfied with that day, and in Otago the men would prefer taking a holiday a fortnight hence. There were 4,800 men to whom this question more or less related. There were 1,200 of them who, by the regulations under which they were engaged, were entitled to and obtained a week's holiday during the year. These men did not get paid for overtime. The other 3,600 men were paid for every hour of overtime which they worked during the year, and on holidays they, in addition to receiving their pay, had a free pass for themselves and their families over the He did not suppose that, in passing railways. this resolution, the House anticipated that the Government were going to make any reprisals on these men, or to take from them any privileges they now possessed under the regulations. The pay and privileges of both sets of men had been equally considered: one set of men got their holidays, whilst others got extra pay. Therefore this resolution must affect the whole staff, because, if one set of men got an additional number of statutory holidays, then the others, now getting a week's holiday, would be entitled to an additional number of holidays also. Honourable members would see that the whole matter would have to be carefully con-

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sidered before anything was done. He might also point out that the honourable member's desire, as indicated in the question, could not be carried out, because only a portion of the men could possibly be spared on these holidays, and the others must have their holidays on days that would suit the department and themselves. Next Monday would be the first holiday that had occurred since the resolution was passed, and arrangements would be made to give these men a day for this holiday.

Mr. FITZHERBERT thanked the honour-

able gentleman for the full reply he had given; but he would like to know whether next Monday

would be given to these men.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said that could not be done, but they would be given a day for it.

CHARITABLE AID.

Mr. PYKE asked the Premier, If the Government will take such action as will equalize the distribution of charitable aid in future? It was absolutely necessary that he should explain the facts in relation to this matter, so that the House might know why he had put the question. Papers containing official information on the subject of charitable aid had been laid on the table at different times during the session, but they were compiled in such a manner that it was only after two or three mornings' labour that he had been able to get out the facts to which he now desired to draw the attention of the Government. Those facts he had tabulated, as follow:-

Charitable-Aid Expenditure, 1883-84.

Provincial District.		Local Contribu- tions on which	been paid by Government.		Given by the Govt, without	any Local Con- tribution.	To by	tal Go me	Vel	en n-
Auckland Taranaki Wellington Hawke's Bay Nelson Marlborough Westland Canterbury Otago			19 17 1 0 17	5 9 0 9 6	22 12,909	5 19 17 7 2 13 16 8	6, 3, 1, 3,	230 917 328 641 757	15 7	7
Total	•••					•	34,	648	18	0

He thought these figures showed that some action on the part of the Government was ne-

Mr. STOUT said the Government knew perfectly well that the distribution of charitable aid had not been conducted on any system whatever; and they also recognized that it would be a matter of considerable difficulty to make the distribution upon any principle until the local governing bodies had been charged with the duty of administering charitable aid. They hoped, however, that this would come about shortly, and that matters would then stand on a more satisfactory footing.

Mr. WALKER said it was only just to South

Canterbury, and especially to Ashburton, that he should mention that the bulk of the contribution which reached Canterbury from the colonial chest really went to those portions of the provincial district which were north of the Rakaia River.

### "THE KING COUNTRY."

Mr. JOYCE asked the Premier, If he has received from the Agent-General any recommendation relative to the work entitled "The King Country," by Mr. J. H. Kerry-Nicholls, a recent traveller in the North Island of New Zealand? He might mention that last year he had met Mr. Nicholls in Auckland, and had accompanied him as far as Wellington, where he had the pleasure of introducing him to the then Colonial Treasurer and other members of the Government, who gave him information which he considered would add to the success of the work. He also understood that the Government led Mr. Nicholls to believe that they would take some copies of the work on its publication. He had received a letter from Mr. Nicholls, in which he said,-

"As you took so kindly an interest in me when in Wellington, you will allow me to mention that the Government promised to take a certain number of copies, so soon as a price could be quoted. Sir Dillon Bell is now writing fully upon the matter to the Government. As the work has entailed a great out-lay, I venture to hope that, if you can, directly or indirectly, do anything to influence the Government to forward my interests by taking as large a number of copies as possible, you will do so. I may mention that the reviews speak in the highest terms of the work, and, as it is one calculated to promote the interests of the colony by attracting. settlers and visitors to its shores, a certain number of copies should, I think, be purchased for distribution among the mechanics' insti-tutions and kindred institutions in Great-Britain.

He would only add that the book did contain a large amount of valuable information, and he should be very glad to see Mr. Nicholls receive the little assistance he desired.

Mr. STOUT said that a communication had been received from the Agent-General with reference to this work, and he recommended that a certain number of copies should be left with him, to be distributed about England. (Mr. Stout) had not had an opportunity of reading the book, but he had heard it very well spoken of, and it was quite probable that the recommendation of the Agent-General would be given effect to.

BERWICK-HENLEY TELEPHONE.

Mr. FULTON asked the Commissioner of Telegraphs, Whether he will cause connection by telephone to be established between Berwick and Henley? He might mention that the people of the district about Berwick were prepared to supply for this telephone extension, and therefore the cost would not be great.

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Sir J. VOGEL replied that the Government would have this work done next year.

Native Land Purchases.

HOSPITAL AND CHARITABLE AID. Mr. G. F. RICHARDSON asked the Government, Would not a resolution of this House be sufficient authority for an altered basis of subsidies to hospitals and charitable institutions to be adopted after the close of the present financial year; and would the Government support a motion—"That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that all grants to hospitals and charitable institutions shall, after the close of the present financial year, be made on the basis of a uniform capitation allowance computed on the average number of persons relieved in such hospitals and by such charitable institutions during the preceding financial year"? He thought point had been given to this question by the figures quoted by the honourable member for the Dunstan with regard to charitable aid.

Mr. STOUT doubted whether a resolution of the House would have much effect in the right direction. The House knew pretty well that, at the present time, a certain number of people did not care for the welfare of their hospitals, and contributed little or nothing towards their support. If these people continued to fail to perform their duty, a resolution of the House would not be of much avail, and, if people were subjected to want because the residents in a particular district did not perform their duty, it would be no good to tell those poor people that the House had passed a resolution to do so-and-so. Strong measures would have to be devised for dealing with this question, and the simplest way would be to compel the people to provide for the support of their hospitals.

NATIVE LAND PURCHASES.

Captain RUSSELL asked the Colonial Trea-Whether the Government have abandoned the policy of purchasing Native land in the North Island? If not, out of what vote or fund money can be provided for the purchase of any land which may be placed under offer during the current year; and, if no such vote or funds exist, whether the Government will place on the supplementary estimates a sum of money to acquire land which may be absolutely essential to the progress of settlement in the North Island?

Sir J. VOGEL replied that a vote had been taken for this purpose since the honourable gentleman had given notice of his question. The sum which had been granted would be sufficient to meet all engagements to the 31st

March next.

MAIL SERVICE WITH ENGLAND.

Mr. PEACOCK asked the Government, Whether they will arrange for insertion, in the proposed contract for the conveyance of mails by direct steamers, of a definite state-ment of the number of trips the steamers shall make each year to the various leading ports of the colony?

Sir J. VOGEL replied that this question was decided in Committee the other evening, and it would be left to the owners of the steamers to decide as to which ports they would call at. No doubt they would call at the ports which offered the best inducements to them.

CORONERS.

Mr. BRADSHAIGH-BRADSHAW asked the Government, If they will, early after the pro-rogation, put into force the resolution of this House, carried by a large majority this session, with reference to the appointment of Coroners?

Mr. TOLE replied that the Government would endeavour to carry out the resolution of the House.

#### GREYMOUTH-BRUNNER RAILWAY FARES.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Minister for Public Works, Whether he will give directions to reduce the fares charged on the Greymouth-Brunner Railway during the holidays?

Mr. E. RICHARDSON could not see his way

clear to give any promise on this subject, espe-cially as the traffic was so small that it would

involve a loss to the revenue.

Mr. GUINNESS thought the honourable gentleman must have been misinformed as to the traffic being small, as the railway spoken of paid the highest percentage of any railway in New Zealand.

BRUNNER AND GREY BRIDGES.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Minister for Public Works,—(1.) Whether he will take immediate steps to abolish the toll on the Brunner Gorge Bridge? (2.) Whether the Government will erect a foot-bridge across the Grey River at Brunnerton, for the convenience of the residents of the Townships of Taylorville, Wallsend, and Brunnerton? He had previously brought this question under the notice of the Minister, and it was with the view of having a definite answer from the honourable gentleman before returning to his constituents that he had placed

the question on the Order Paper.

Mr. E. RICHARDSON said the honourable gentleman had several times put this question, and he (Mr. Richardson) had endeavoured to explain the very serious difficulty of dealing with the matters referred to. With regard to the first question, the Government were not prepared to take any steps at present to abolish the toll, and for the simple reason that it was in the interests of public safety that no inducement whatever should be given to make further use of the bridge than at present. With regard to the second question, he might say that a proposal had been made, with a view to lightening the traffic on the bridge, to have a footbridge attached to the bridge; but, for many reasons, the officers of the department hesitated to make such a recommendation. answer to the honourable member some time back was to the effect that, if the local bodies found the balance of the money, the Govern-ment would contribute, towards the cost of the erection of a foot-bridge lower down the

river, the sum that would be required for the construction of the attached foot-bridge. He thought that was the most reasonable view to take of the matter, and he hoped that when the honourable gentleman went back to his constituents he would be able to induce the local bodies to accept that solution of the difficulty.

#### WESTPORT COLLIERY COMPANY.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Minister of Lands, If he will set aside 100 acres of land adjoining the area of 150 acres recently bought by the Westport Colliery Company at Wallsend, and have same surveyed into sections, and offered for sale to the occupiers and the public?

Mr. BALLANCE replied that instructions had been given to survey a township on land at Greymouth, and that the survey was now going on, with the object of giving effect to the proposal contained in the honourable gentle-

man's question.

## AUCKLAND-WELLINGTON TELEGRAPH.

Mr. PEACOCK asked the Colonial Treasurér, without notice, Whether there is any intention of improving the telegraphic communication between Auckland and the South, so as to obviate the inconveniences and vexatious delays which frequently result from interruptions in the line? He might state that these delays were the cause of great annoyance to the commercial public, and also to those connected with the Press; and he should be glad to have some assurance that steps would be taken to prevent the occurrence of such frequent interruptions.

Sir J. VOGEL replied that the department were quite sensible of the inconvenience arising from the limited nature of the telegraphic communication with Auckland, and were considering the best means of carrying through an alternative line of communication. The honourable gentleman might rely upon it that the subject would receive the consideration of the depart-

ment, with a view to speedy action.

# WESTLAND EDUCATION DISTRICT SUBDIVISION BILL.

Mr. STOUT moved, That the amendments made by the Legislative Council in this Bill be disagreed with. The amendments were to the effect that no Education Board whatever was to be constituted in the district: two subdivisions were to be recognized, but the management of the whole matter was to be left in the hands of a Commissioner or Commissioners. Since the Bill had been passed by the Council the district had been consulted, and he had received a large number of telegrams asking that the Westland District, at all events, should have a Board of its own. He therefore proposed, with a view to see whether some arrangement could not be come to between the Houses, that the amendments should be disagreed with. Of course, if the Council insisted on its amendments, the House would have to accept the Bill as it stood.

Amendments disagreed with, and Mr. Shep

hard, Mr. Seddon, and Mr. Stout appointed a Committee to draw up reasons for the disagreement.

Reasons brought up and agreed to.

#### FISHERIES CONSERVATION BILL.

Mr. TOLE moved the second reading of this Bill. Its object was to provide efficient machinery for carrying out Acts at present on the Statute Book in which there were considerable defects. There was no efficient machinery at present for preventing the wholesale destruction

of fish.

Mr. SMITH said this was a great improvement on the Bill previously brought before the House, but there were still in it one or twoprovisions which gave rise to much opposition in the former Bill. Subsections (2) and (3) of clause 3 provided that any person taking fish in water of which he was the proprietor, or any person authorized by such owner, was exempt from the operation of this Act. Great objection had been made to that, for this reason: The Governor in Council, no doubt, would issue regulations imposing a fee, which every person would have to pay. But throughout New Zealand there were persons owning miles and miles. of frontages to rivers, who had never paid a farthing towards stocking the rivers, more than the general public, but, because they happened to have land close up to those rivers, they and their friends would be enabled under this Bill to fish without paying for licenses, whereas any boy or any person fishing in the same rivers would have to pay for a license.

Mr. HATCH was glad the Government had thought proper to bring down this Bill. It was one of the most important brought before them. He quite understood the idea thrown out by the honourable member for Waipawa; but he hoped that the whole business of the fishing interests right through the colony would be conserved in a way very different from what they had been of late years. This country at the present time had no idea of the efforts made in other large countries to protect the fisheries. Although the law already in force with regard to seal-fishing appeared very stringent, it was not nearly stringent enough to prevent foreign parties, and perhaps some of themselves, from destroying those animals unlawfully. He hoped this Bill would be made as stringent as possible, and would not be mangled in Committee.

Mr. GRIGG said the honourable member for Waipawa had quite misunderstood the clause. As he (Mr. Grigg) understood it, it simply referred to water owned entirely and absolutely by the owners of property. It meant this: that, if a man made a fish-pond in his own garden, he could take the fish from that pond just the same as he could take poultry from his poultry-yard.

Sir G. GREY could not quite agree with the remarks of the last speaker. He (Sir G. Grey) contended that the rivers and the fish in them were the common property of the whole nation. Why, therefore, should any person pay a license

for fishing in waters running through Government land?

Fisheries Conservation Bill.

Bill read a second time.

#### IN COMMITTEE.

 Clause 2, subsection (3).—Act shall not apply to any person taking fish in water of which he is the owner.

Mr. SMITH moved the omission of the words

" any person taking fish in water."

The Committee divided on the question,
"That the words stand part of the clause."

AYES.	38.
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Barron	Holmes	Richardson, G.
Beetham	Johnston	Rolleston
Bruce	Lake	Samuel
Bryce	Lance	Shephard
Buchanan	Levestam	Stewart, W. D.
Buckland, J. C.	Macandrew	Stout
Conolly	McKenzie, J.	Tole
Cowan	McMillan	Trimble
Dodson	Menteath	Wakefield
Duncan	Moat	Walker.
Gillies	Peacock	Tellers.
Grigg	Pyke	Fitzherbert .
Harper	Richardson, E.	Fulton.

#### Noes, 16.

Fraser	Newman	Turnbull
Grey	Pere	White, W.
Guinness	Sutter	· .
Hatch	Taiaroa	. Tellers.
Joyce	Thompson, T.	Cadman
Locke	Thomson, J. W	

Majority for, 22.

Words retained.

Mr. COWAN moved the addition of the words "other than running streams."

The Committee divided.

#### AYES, 24.

Ballance	Joyce	Taiaroa
Barron	Larnach	Thomson, J. W.
BBradshaw	Locke	Tole
Cadman	Newman	Turnbull
Duncan	O'Conor	Vogel.
Fraser	Pere	Tellers.
Grey	Smith	Cowan
Guinness	Sutter	Shrimski.
Hatch		
	Nozs, 26.	
TD	TTalmass	Dallanton

	Nors, 26.	
Bryce	Holmes	Rolleston
Buchanan	Lake	Samuel
Dodson	Lance	Shephard
Fitzherbert	Macandrew	Trimble
Fulton	McMillan	Wakefield
Gillies	Menteath .	Walker.
Grigg	Moat	Tellers.
Harper	Peacock	Conolly
Hobbs	Richardson, G.	

Majority against, 2.

Amendment negatived. Bill reported, and read a third time.

#### RIVER BOARDS BILL. IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 89.—Rate to be property-rate, either uniform or according to classification.

Sir G. Grey

Mr. GRIGG moved, That subsection (1) be struck out.

The Committee divided on the question, "That the subsection be retained."

#### AYES, 37.

Allwright	Hirst, H.	Samuel
Atkinson	Hobbs	Shephard
Barron	Johnston .	Shrimski
BBradshaw	Lance	Smith
Brown	Larnach	Sutter
Cadman	Locke	Taiaroa
Cowan	Macarthur	Tole
Dargaville	Menteath	Turnbull
Fitzherbert	Newman	Wilson.
Garrick	O'Callaghan	•
Guinness	Peacock	Tellers.
Hakuene	Ross	Fulton
Hamlin	Russell	Stewart, W. D.
	Noes, 21.	•
Bruce	Lake	Thomson, J. W.
Buchanan	Macandrew	Trimble
Dodson	McKenzie, J.	Walker
Duncan	Richardson, E.	White, W.
Gillies	Stout	Tellers.
Hatch	Te Ao	Conolly
Holmes	Thompson, T.	Grigg.
Joyce		- 00

Majority for, 16.

Amendment negatived, and clause agreed to.

Bill reported, and read a third time.

# GREYMOUTH HARBOUR BOARD BILL (No. 2).

Sir J. VOGEL, in asking leave to introduce this Bill, said its object was to correct a mistake in the Greymouth Harbour Board Bill. It appeared that, by a mistake, the Bill was not sent up correctly to the Upper House, the words "and fifty," which were inserted in Committee in this House having been omitted, so that the amount in the Bill stood at £100,000 instead of £150,000. The Assistant-Clerk had furnished him with evidence showing how the mistake had occurred. The object of the Bill was simply to restore the words as passed through the House of Representatives.

Bill read a first, a second, and a third time.

# NATIVE LAND ALIENATION RESTRICTION BILL.

Mr. Stout brought up the following reasons. for this House disagreeing with the amendments made by the Legislative Council in clause 7 of this Bill:—

"That the power of the Crown to purchase land from a subject cannot be restricted except by a specific Act, which must be reserved for Her Majesty's assent.

"That the restriction proposed is not justified

by experience.

"That, if any restriction is called for, there is no reason to suppose that Native Committees have yet attained the position which would justify the Legislature in placing them as arbiters between the owners of land and the representatives of the Crown."

Sir G. GREY.—I must say, Sir, that I cannot agree with one part of these reasons. I think

that the Committees are absolutely able to conduct the sales of land.

Mr. STOUT.—We do not say they are not to lo so.

Sir G. GREY .-- Yes: that is the effect of the reasons; and I dissent entirely from them. am not arguing at present in favour of what the Council has done, but I do not think the statements contained in these reasons in reply to the Council can be maintained. The Crown for years purchased lands from the Natives in the way the Council propose. I made many purchases myself in that manner, and it has really been the practice of the Crown to purchase lands in that way. Therefore I cannot admit that there is any justification at all for saying that it is taking power from the Crown to deal with this matter as the Council proposes to do. It is, however, a reversion to the system which has been in operation in past years, and I cannot see any objection to it. I must say that the Natives showed that they had the power of conducting their sales of land well; and I think the Committees proposed might in a greater degree be relied upon. But where I think the difficulty has arisen in this case is this: that formerly it was distinctly understood that, the Crown having the sole right to purchase, all sales of lands so purchased must take place in New Zealand, and were to be made openly under rules fixed by the Crown. Now, I presume that, if this general rule is made,—that the Committees are to have the sole power of selling their lands,—they may sell the lands in a way which would not be advantageous to the public interest. I think the House will probably agree with the principles on which I take the following view of the case. We entered this country when the Natives were unable in many cases to preserve the possession of their lands. Their title to the land was continually varying every few years, when one tribe conquered another and took possession of their land. When we entered New Zealand, however, we undertook that every Native should be preserved in the possession of the property he held at the time. That was giving the Natives a very great advantage indeed. It was giving them, in point of fact, security of tenure. Then, we asked, in part return for that, that they should grant the Crown the right of pre-emption. We promised, further, to give great value to their land, a much greater value than they could get for their lands in their former state - by introducing a large European population into the colony, and by constructing public works of various kinds; and the condition was that, in recognition of our entering into these engagements, the Natives would give the Crown the right of pre-emption. The Crown bought for the public good, and a large quantity of lands was so bought exactly under the system which it is now proposed to introduce into this Bill. But, after a time, the colonists of New Zealand engaged to give up this right of preemption, which was an extraordinary boon to the Natives. That had this effect: It was

at once to create a great race of landowners in the colony, probably some of the largest landowners in the world, and to tell them that the price they could realize from the sale of their lands under the advantageous circumstances of the colony was to become their property. But I do not think the settlers, in giving up the pre-emptive right, at all undertook to agree that the Natives should dispose of their lands exactly as they pleased. I think it was intended that it should be considered that the public had a claim still upon their lands, to this effect: that they should dictate the places where they were to be sold, and the manner in which the sale was to take place, so that the public interests might be fairly considered. Now, I apprehend that, if we gave over to the Committees the power of selling the land exactly as they liked, they might possibly send an agent to England, and the whole of this valuable land might be sold in the markets of England to large speculators and to persons there, and the settlers might be deprived of a valuable right—that is, the right of purchasing this land in New Zealand; and I think we should place a restriction on that kind of sale. I think, also, we have the right to reserve to the public power to dictate the size in which the blocks of Native land are to be offered to the public in this country, and the conditions under which they are to be sold. Therefore I shall be sorry to see a general principle adopted by which the Committees would have the absolute power of selling the lands when and how they please. I believe they might suffer great wrongs under such a system, and the settlers also. But, whilst I go as far as I believe they have great I think the control in have gone, I think the land, if the Crown is the purchaser, must be purchased by the Crown in the manner in which the Legislative Council says it should be purchased; and we are doing no wrong whatever in reverting to that system. We have a perfect right to revert to a system which the Crown followed for years, and which takes from the Crown, I believe, no power whatever. I cannot agree, therefore, with the objection in that respect. Then, on the other point, as to the incapacity of the Natives for dealing with the Government. Years ago, when they were not so advanced as they now are, they showed a perfect capacity for doing that, and I think they are perfectly capable of doing so at this moment. I leave the matter to the House. I do not think we should agree to objections which I believe are baseless: that is, they have no true foundation to rest upon.

Mr. TE AO.—Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak with regard to this matter. I wish to refer to what the Premier has stated. He has stated that the Government will not agree to the amendments. One of the amendments proposed by the other House is identical with an amendment which I proposed to add to the Bill before it passed this House. But now, seeing that the Government will not consent to the amendments which have been made by the Upper House, I am of opinion that the Government wish to take the land away from the Natives, because these amendments appear

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to be in the direction of finding out the proper owners of the soil. After the Committee has decided who are the proper owners of the soil, then they would have power to sell the land. The Government will not be in a position to have knowledge as to who are the owners of the land and who are not. I think the Native Committee is most fitted to decide who are the owners of the land, because the Europeans have not the knowledge of Maori customs which the Native Committees have. All that Europeans know about is the money. Some of the Natives, whose talk may be very good, may be only small owners of the land. I think the amendments made by the Upper House are correct and good ones. I think the ownership of the land should be decided by the Native Committees. This would not take away the authority from the Government at all; but it is a new experiment. Another reason is, that this land is common land. It has not passed the Court. Therefore I think the Committees should deal with it, and the Committees could then hand the land over to the Government. I do not think the Government should stand in the way of Committees administering the land. This House has already given authority to Native Committees in the year 1883. This House passed the Native Committees Act in 1883. Now, I have heard the Premier state that he will not consent to give that power to the Native Committees. Why, then, was the power given to them last year, and why should it be taken from them now? We are all called upon to speak on this subject.

Mr. PERE.—My sincere desire is that the Government should accept the amendments proposed by the Upper House. I believe that great good will result if this is done. It will result in the speedy settlement of the land. If these amendments are not agreed to, then trouble will arise, and the settlement of the land will not be agreed to speedily. I make a prophecy now that, unless these amendments are agreed to, nothing will be done with regard to that land during this year. The Premier has stated to the House that he will not agree to Natives having the carrying-out of the sales and leases of the land, and the result will be that the Natives will think that this Government intend to do wrong to them.

Mr. STOUT.—No.

Mr. PERE. — But why, then, should they desire to take away these Native Committees? Are they afraid to trust the Native people? I think the Government should have some consideration and give way in this matter. If the Government and the Natives jointly act, then great benefits will result, because this law prevents outsiders from dealing with the land. Seeing that outsiders are debarred from dealing with the land, what have the Government to fear? All the Native members stated in this House that the administration of the land should rest with the Government and with the Native Committees, but the Government must not buy the land from or deal with individuals. There are two evils which result from dealing with single individuals. One trouble is felt by

the. Natives, and the other evil is felt by the-Government. If the Government should pay any money to individuals, and the Court should subsequently find that they are not owners, then that money is lost; and the Government will be very liable to pay money to those who are not the owners of the land: they will be influenced by statements which people make that they are owners. Such a proceeding asthis will bring trouble upon the land and upon the owners of the land. The Government ought not to be afraid that the Natives will sell the land to outsiders, because they are restricted by this Bill from doing so. I think that, if the administration of the land is left to the Government and to the Committees, then all the proceedings will be aboveboard; they will not be like the negotiations and the dealings with the lands in times past. The evil doings of the Europeans in the past have stopped; but now the door is being opened for such proceedings to be carried on again by the Government. I think that the Government and the Natives jointly should deal with the land. We, the Natives, do not think that the people who give the largest price for the land should alone deal with the lands. Europeans will not give their lands for 6d. an acre—not for £2, or £3, or £10 an acre. But, because you deem the Maoris a very simple people, you offer them only 6d. an acre for their land. But, now that the Natives are becoming aware of the facts of the case, I think they should legislate upon their lands. You wish to make a railway, and the line has been agreed to by the Natives. If the Government wish to purchase portions of land along the line of railway, then they should go to the Native Committee and make terms with them. If the Government wish to act in concert with the Natives, they should do so, so that prosperity may come to the Natives; so that the land may be obtained by Europeans; so that the land may be covered with settlers, and the Government derive great benefit. If this takes place, then great benefit will result to the colony, because there will be many people to pay the taxes, and the Government will derive the benefit. If all the Native lands are occupied, then the Government will derive the benefit. The Government should not force the Natives to sell their land for only 6d. an acre, because, if the Government obtain possession of the land, they will sell it at £1, £2, or £3 an acre—for more, probably. Considering that the Natives have lost nearly the whole of their lands, I think the Government should take care. of what is left for them. No doubt the Natives will meet the Government half-way, as it were, and allow them to have the portion of land they desire to acquire. The Natives will be very glad to meet the Government in a proper spirit, and make satisfactory arrangements. I believe, if the Government continue in their present course, that it must be their desire to stop settlement altogether on that land; and also it must be their desire, I think, to cause trouble. And, thirdly, I think that their desire must be to murder the Natives. I think



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that only giving a small payment for the land—I think that amounts to murder: it is tantamount to killing people. Wahanui spoke in this House and showed what he wanted, and one honourable member of this House proposed the amendment of the Bill; and that Bill was hurried through the House and passed that night. I will now refer to what has been said by the honourable member for Auckland East. That honourable member said that he would not consent to the Committees selling the land in England. The Native people will not sell the land in large blocks. I hope the present Government will have the land surveyed in small blocks, and sold, but not in large portions. Let it be sold to the highest bidder. By that means people will be brought from England to settle upon the lands. I think it is wrong to allow single individuals to purchase twenty or thirty thousand acres. That system prevents settlement of the land and of the colony, and the Queen does not derive a proportionate amount of benefit from the land. I think the Government should consider that the Committeesthe Native Committees—are the proper people to administer the land. And, speaking on this matter a few days since, I then said that the Native lands should all be adjudicated upon. I said that a Native Committee should be appointed to deal with every block-a sepamite Committee for each block. These Committees should be elected from the owners. The Governor and the Natives should appoint a Board to manage these lands. I think the Government should be the friends of the Natives and help them to deal with the land. Why should the dealing with the land be taken to England? Perhaps the proposal to take the dealing with the land is to prevent the Natives knowing what price is paid for it. My desire in coming into this House was that the Govern-ment should assist the Natives, because the Natives are now only a remnant that has been spared from the action of former laws and Governments. And now this House is going to murder the Natives; but the Upper House has evinced some consideration for them. I entirely approve of the action of that Chamber. I now beg that the Premier and the Native Minister will assent to the amendments, and not return the Bill to the Upper House. In my opinion this matter should not be sent to a division. I have stated before now that this is the reason why bad laws will be made in the future: There are only four of us Maoris in this House; and the Government should pay some attention to the prayer of the Natives who are constantly coming to this House and asking for just laws. It is stated in the Governor's Speech that it was proposed that the Government and the Natives jointly should devise some law to administer Native affairs; and, if the amendments of the Upper House are not accepted, then I shall believe that there was no truth in that statement in the Governor's Speech. The Native Minister assured this House that he would act conjointly with the Natives. I think he is de-parting from that statement, for if he intended

to these amendments. The Government have by this Bill stopped the dealing of private individuals with the land; and whom have they now to fear? Look at my district; look at the state of it in 1869. On that occasion the Government said to the Natives, "Give us your land, and we will take care of it; the Queen will take care of your land, lest the Europeans get hold of it." After that, the Land Court was sent into the district. The lands were passed through the Court, and were awarded to the owners; but in 1872 it was found that the law under which the land passed through the Court awarded it to the joint tenants. It was then found that the land could not be be-queathed by the people in the grant. The Natives think that the promise made to them about the Queen taking care of their land was false, and that the object of that law was that the land should eventually pass to the Government. Under that law, if all the joint tenants died, the land would revert to the Crown. I hope the Government will not take advantage and make use of laws like these I speak of. The Maoris, in my opinion, will meet the Government in a proper spirit, like chiefs, and the railways will be speedily made. The only cause of delay in making the railways will be the want of money. There will be no delay on the part of the Natives. It has been said that the Natives derive benefit, and not the Government. I think that statement is wrong. If the people are afraid of the Natives benefiting by the railway, better not to make the railway at all. Leave the land alone. I think this sort of thing should stop. The Maoris are not objecting to paying rates, although the benefit they receive from the land is very small. Look at the wharf at Wellington. That was not made by the Government; it was made by the Natives. The land inshore was bought by the Government, but the place where the wharf stands belonged to the Natives, and was a pipibank of theirs. A great deal of Native money is being spent for the benefit of the public. The duties on the sale of Native land go to the Crown, and the payment the Natives receive for their land is very small. The Europeans would never part with their land for the small consideration that the Natives have been in the habit of getting. Europeans are always casting in the teeth of the Natives that they are the means of increasing the value of Native lands; but I say the Native lands have not been improved by the fact of Europeans coming here. The prosperity of the Natives depends upon the present state of their lands—that is, their forests. They were in the habit of deriving very great benefit from their forest lands, from the food and the birds and the rats that they got there. But the animals introduced by the Europeans have destroyed all the rats and the birds that formerly lived in the forests. The European rat has eaten up the Maori rat, and only the people now remain, and they are now being killed in their turn. I think it is quite time that the Government should now commence to try and save the Natives. The English people who are living in New Zealand

are living in prosperity. Do not let the Government pay much attention to the people who are living in prosperity, but let them rather look to the sick and the indigent. Let them heal the sick. If this Bill becomes law, then the Natives will constantly be coming to this House with their complaints. I am not speaking as if I wished to go down amongst the Europeans. I want you to listen to what I have to say. I want you to listen to me and hear me taking farewell of my land, and speaking of the grievances of my people. This House for the last thirty years has been passing laws respecting the Natives. It was the Europeans who advised the Natives first to pass their land through the Court before selling it, so that the owners and the extent of their claims should be found out. The amendments proposed by the Upper House are very simple—merely that the Native Committees shall ascertain the owners, and then it will be for the Government to purchase the land from those owners. Why should this simple proposition be opposed by the Europeans? Why should the Government have power given them to go and buy land from the Natives, seeing that the Government are now afraid of these Native Committees? The duty of these Committees will be to assemble the people in one place, so that they may hear what the proposals of the Government are. I do not believe I am making a false accusation when I say, as I do now, that it is the desire of the Government to buy land from the Natives. If the Government do that, why not allow private individuals to do it also?
—because, if that is allowed, the Natives will get much larger prices for their land. Let the Government state their prices, and the outside Europeans theirs. I think that the Government should pay attention to what Wahanui has said. He is willing to meet the Government in a fair spirit, and the Government should pay attention to what he has said in this House. I do not think that honourable members should laugh at me. I am speaking because I feel very deeply about this matter. Let the Europeans laugh within themselves, for they have always been in the habit of doing that. Do not let honourable members say, "I did not laugh; it was somebody else who laughed." How am I to know whether you are laughing or not? I do not understand the English language. My great desire now is that a great many evils shall not come upon the land and the people; because the work which has been done in this House will be known hereafter. That is the effect of the laws which are now being passed by this House. I do not think that the Government should pay any heed to the counsels of outsiders. The Government should be guided entirely by the Maoris in regard to Maori matters, and listen to the Europeans on matters which concern Europeans. My coat that I have on is my own. Therefore I have no hesitation in speaking about that coat, and I shall not feel ashamed because of the remarks that anybody makes about that coat. I will not be deterred from making a long speech by any- saying. I speak this way, because the Maoris

thing that anybody says. I came here for the purpose of making speeches. If I saw that the Government were willing to help me, my mouth would never be opened at all; I should never get up to speak. If the Government will not pay any attention to what I am saying, I cannot help that. I was elected by my people suffering from, and to ask this House if they will not show us some pity. I think that something should be done, because we can place no obstacles in the way of your taking the authority. I did not come to this House for the purpose of making threats of what I would do if my prayers were not granted. My object in coming here was to settle the grievances and the wrongs from which we are suffering, in the hope that some enlightened person would help Perhaps honourable members find fault with me for the length of my speech. I do not think that that should be the case, because the Europeans have occupied the last three months in dealing with their own affairs, and all that is left for me is to bid farewell to the land and the people. All I have to say is to bid farewell to them, and let them go. How can I help it? I am only one among many thousands. If any one in this House has any love for the Maori people, let him stand up now and show it. Do not let it be shown by saying Yes or No. Do not let it be settled in this way: if any plan is proposed by which the Natives will derive benefit, to say "No" to it. Is it because they are afraid of the Premier that they all call out "No"? I think right and justice is a thing you should consider, and truth and love. That is greater than all that has been spoken of. There is nothing greater than love. Perhaps you think I have no better subject to talk about than this. If I wished to speak of other subjects I should talk all night upon them. The Hon. the Premier stated that he will not agree to the amendments proposed by the other House, and I now know the meaning of those words of his. The result of those words of his will be that the Natives will go to the place of departed spirits. Notwithstanding that the Premier may state that he wishes to benefit the Maoris, that his great desire is to bring prosperity to the Maoris, what proof have we that he is sincere? If he agrees with the amendments proposed by the other House, then I shall know that he is sincere, and I will lie down at his feet. My desire is that honourable members should gather around me and assist me, and not pay any attention to what the Premier says. The Premier has had his way; and I think you should help me now. I think Wahanui will make friends with the Premier and the Native Minister if they help him. My love for that chief, when he stood up in this House like a slave as it were, was very great; and in going to the other House, and in going to see the Ministers day after day, he was in the position of a suppliant. And what is the result of those proceedings? This Bill is brought in now to do him a wrong. I hope the Premier will not be angry with what I am

are only a remnant that has been left. The bulk of them have been killed. The reason for our coming to this House was that we hoped to obtain relief. I am sure, if we obtain that relief, the colony will benefit thereby. I do not think that this House should be afraid of the amendments proposed by the Upper House. It seems to me that you are afraid of its amendments. I take this fear of yours as a great compliment to ourselves. It shows our strength. I thought that the power rested with the Eurothought that the power rested with the Europeans—that this was a House where good and bad laws were made. But the Maori people are not in this position. They have no House wherein to make laws. But why should you, who are in possession of this House, be afraid of this amendment? I hope the Premier will consent to this amendment. If he does not, I will talk all night. I could talk for a whole wask. If the Hop the Premier will consent week. If the Hon. the Premier will consent to insert these amendments, then I will stop speaking. I shall then have no reason to call for a division upon this subject. I believe that all the members of this House will be guided by what the Premier says, and, if he assures me that he will give way, then I will stop speaking. I could go on for a week, repeating these few simple words, "Agree to my proposal;" and, if all the honourable members go away, leaving no one but the Premier and myself in possession of this House, that will not matter. I shall not prevent any other honourable member having an opportunity of speaking. I shall wait until the Premier agrees to my wish. I now ask the Hon. the Premier if he will consent to the amendments proposed by the Upper House. I am waiting for a reply. I ask the Hon. the Premier a second time if he will agree to my wish. If the Hon. the Premier will not agree, I will now address myself to the Hon. Sir Julius Vogel. I have to apply to him, because the Hon. the Native Minister is not in the House. I believe he has gone away in anger, because his colleagues will not consent. I ask the Government again if they will consent. We are all one race. I do not think the Government should have any hesitation in agreeing to my wish. I do not think that the older and younger brothers should quarrel. I believe that I am distantly related to the Hon. Sir Julius Vogel. I believe I could trace our ancestors. If the House wishes it, I could give our ancestors. (The honourable member here mentioned the names of several of his ancestors.) I only refer to our ancestors to show that we are all of the one race. I have asked the Government again, and they have not answered it. I have asked them to accept the amendments proposed by the Upper House. I only want a reply in the affirmative, and, if this is not given, I will go on talking. It is my wish that the Native Committees should have the administering of the lands. The first Committees are now constituted to carry on ordinary business. They can carry out the wish of the Government; but the second Committees have to deal with the land and ascertain the owners. We want to find out the causes of the prosperity of the European population.

The people here in Wellington have no lands, and they live in prosperity. We want to find out the causes of that prosperity. I want to find out where they hide it. This knowledge the Europeans keep from the Natives. I believe that this knowledge must be in the Committees. That is why the Government desire to prevent us from getting the Committees. They are afraid that, if these Committees administer the land, the land will be cut up into small blocks and sold to the advantage of the Natives. I think that these Committees contain the secret of our future success. That is why I ask the Government to grant them to us. If the Government will consent to give those Committees to us, then I will thank them very sincerely. Let this cause of prosperity be given to the Natives now. I will still pray for this benefit to be given to us. Why should I ask when everything has been given to me? But, if these things are held back, then I ask for them to be given to me. I have some consideration for the Interpreter. When he gets tired out, I shall then get the other Interpreter to help me. When both Interpreters are exheusted, then I must get a third. I hope the reporters will report all I am saying. I hope they will not be directed to leave out any of my statements. This is our request to the Government: To give me what I ask for. I will content myself with repeating that word. Why should I go to any distance to get other subjects to talk about? Seeing that the Government are holding back, I will continue to ask, why should the Government hold back? Seeing that the Government are holding back, that convinces me that our prosperity lies in having granted to us what I am asking for. If I get what I want, then it will be for me to say how much land I shall give the Government, and how much I shall keep to myself. Why should the Government get everything, and I nothing? At the present time my love for the Maoris is very great. My love for the Maoris is much greater than my love for my own mother. That is why I think the Hon. the Premier should show some consideration for the Natives also. If the Hon. the Premier has nothing to say to me, I shall continue to speak. If the Hon. the Premier will consent to consult with his colleagues and decide what is to be done, then I will stop. I am quite willing that the Government should have a meeting on the subject; but I hope they will not hold a meeting for the purpose of re-fusing my request. I will not talk on any other subject, but will simply ask that my request be granted. I am justified in making that request, because I am suffering from great trouble. A sick person need not be ashamed of ashing for relief; for what else has he to do? I again ask that my question be answered. If the Minister for Public Works will say "Yes," I shall be satisfied; or if the Minister of Justice will show his love for me, I shall be satisfied. I hope that his love for me will be as tall as his hat is. I hope that he will speak to me like a chief, and that he will show some consideration for me, because I am sick. The Govern-

ment is the doctor. If the members of this House will show love for the Natives I am sure that the Native people will have no other idea than that of wishing to act jointly with the Government. I do not like this proposition that the Government shall have power to buy land from the Natives. That is what I object to, and I hope you will pay some attention to what has been said by the honourable member for Auckland East. He said that he does not object to the amendments of the Legislative Council. I hope you will not curse me in your hearts; but, if you do, I cannot help it.
If the Government will consent to my wish,
then I will sit down. I hope you will not complain of my constant repetitions. What is a sick person to do but to repeat his request over and over again? If Her Majesty the Queen were near at hand, I should go straight to her and ask for relief. I think that, seeing this is a new Government, their works should be new, and they should not follow the old work; but it seems that this Government is following on the footsteps of a former Government. I am not urging for a speedy answer; I can afford to wait. I hope the House and the Government will show me some consideration.

Mr. MOSS.—I am quite sure the House will bear with the honourable gentleman who has just sat down. I feel myself that he is fighting for bare life. Any one who has known what the transactions of the Government land agents, practically the Government itself, have been, in the dealings with the Maoris for their land, can readily understand the terror with which they find themselves handed over to the tender mercies of the Government and such agents as the Government may pick up here and there under the Act which we are now considering. Do not let us be deceived by any high-sounding phrases. The Government do not purchase Native land. The Government employ all kinds of persons as agents. Occasionally they may get agents of a high character, but very often it is just the reverse. I have often, in this House, had occasion to denounce various transactions by the Government Native land agents, and the Premier particularly must be aware, from his knowledge of Government affairs, that many Government land purchases are infinitely worse than ever were attempted by private in-dividuals, with this difference: that the Natives have no means of redress at all when they are deceived and wronged by the Government, but if they are wronged by private individuals they have means of redress. I am not going to take up much time, because, although I regard it as one of the worst matters which we have had to deal with, affecting seriously the whole of the country, especially the North Island, still I do not suppose that anything one can say will have much effect. But I should like to call attention to one particular point. If I am correctly informed, these alterations that have been made in the Bill in the Legislative Council have been made at the suggestion of a Committee of the Council composed, to a large extent, of some of the most eminent members of the Legislative Council, gentlemen

who are best acquainted with the state of Then, I should like to trouble the House with a short extract, which will show honourable members that the terror of the Natives is not altogether without foundation.

Mr. STOUT.—I would point out that the honourable gentleman is not in order. The question before the House is not that we disagree with the amendments of the Legislative Council. That has been carried. The question is, whether we shall adopt these reasons for a disagreement.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER.—The honourable member must confine himself to dealing with the reasons which have been brought up.

Mr. MOSS.—Yes; I am going to give reasons why they should not be adopted. I presume the Premier wishes to see justice done. He does not want to burke discussion. What I am going to quote is accessible to all honourable members. It is simply a short history of the manner in which the Ngatirahiri Tribe was dealt with. My object is to show that the Natives have justification for their being terrified at being handed over to the mercy of the Government. The extract is as follows:—

"From the commencement of the West Coast difficulties the Ngatirahiri Tribe, with the exception of about twenty individuals, was always loyal, and even those few who joined the rebels returned to their loyalty before Sir George Grey's condoning Proclamation of 1865, which restored them to all their rights as members of the tribe. A number of the tribe were enrolled under Captain Good, two lieutenants, and an ensign, and employed in the military occupation of the Urenui dis-

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER.—That has nothing to do with the question.

Mr. MOSS.—I wish to justify the position

the Natives take up.
The DEPUTY-SPEAKER.—You are going a roundabout way, I confess, to do it.

Mr. MOSS .- How a roundabout way? I am reading an official document showing how the Natives have been treated.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER.—It has no bearing whatever upon the motion before the House.

Mr. MOSS.—I must bow to your decision, Sir, but, at the same time, I should like to call attention to a matter of such great importance. If I am not to have an opportunity of showing reasons why the House should not agree—

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER. - You had an

opportunity at a previous stage of the Bill. Mr. MOSS.—Well, I should like to ask members to read the document, A.-5, 1884, signed by Sir William Fox, and relating to the mar-vellous wrongs done to a tribe of Natives on the West Coast. I doubt whether the honourable gentleman has read it.

An Hon. MEMBER.—I say I have read it. Mr. MOSS .- Then I do not envy the honourable gentleman if, having read it, he can look coolly on, and not have a feeling of sympathy with the honourable members in that comer

of the chamber who are struggling, as they are, against superior numbers; and I think that, if we had the slightest spark of generosity, we should feel bound to accord to them the fullest consideration. I took an active part in inducing the last speaker (Mr. Pere) to sit down, and I am only sorry that I did not let him have his own way, for I did hope to have an opportunity of helping him by quoting the document which I hold in my hand, and which I am debarred from reading by the rules of the House.

Mr. SHRIMSKI.—I am sorry, at this time of night, to find it necessary to say a few words. The honourable member for Parnell asked for our sympathy, and that the Natives should not be handed over to the tender mercies of the Government. Are they to be handed over to the tender mercies of agents? To whom can they be better handed over than to the Government? The Government are the proper parties to deal with Native lands—not the agents. I, for one, admit that the four Maori members of this House are the most intelligent of their race that have ever sat in this Chamber; but the time for intimidating this House.—

time for intimidating this House—
Mr. MOSS.—Is the honourable gentleman in order? He is discussing the conduct of the

Native members.

Mr. SHRIMSKI.—I have not done so yet. The intimidation they hold out about the wars going to take place, and the troubles coming over us, should not have been attempted. I think the whole thing has been got up for the purpose of making a little capital out of it, and I am not ashamed or afraid to say so. The Government are the proper persons to take charge of Native lands, and in their hands the Natives will be far more honestly dealt with.

Mr. MOSS.—Sir, you called me to order when I was showing that the Government were not the proper persons; but now the honourable gentleman is showing they are the proper persons. If it is right he should do that, surely it is my privilege to show, by undoubted facts in history that they are not the proper persons.

history, that they are not the proper persons.

Mr. HAKUENE.—I will not detain the House long with the remarks I wish to make. I had thought that this matter was past and done with. But this discussion has been brought up again; therefore I wish to say something on the subject. I hope the Government and honourable members will show great consideration for the Native members. Now, these Natives from Waikato are not associated with us. They hold a different position. They have occupied different positions in times past, and now they have come out of the darkness. I am alluding to the part they took during the rebellion; and now they are coming back like the prodigal son. I compare these Natives to the son who came back from distant lands to see his parents. But the parent did not show any consideration or love towards his first-born. He showed his love, not to his dutiful first-born child, but to his undutiful son. He clothed him in fine garments, and killed the fatted calf for him. Well, I think we should treat Wahanui in that spirit. He has come

out of the darkness. He brought his grievances to us, and asked for redress. Last year this House passed a measure giving certain powers to Native Committees. Those powers were not given to Committees by the act of any outside people, but by this House. Now, the Native members in this House do not know there are any Native Committees behind us other than those already appointed. But, according to the amendments proposed by the Upper House, it appears that there are to be Native Committees other than those of the Maoris interested. Therefore we consent to that. I quite approve of preventing outside Europeans from having any dealings with the Native lands, but I do think it is only right that the Native Committees should assist the Government in dealing with the land. I think that there should be Committees to assist the Govern-ment. I think this is all the more necessary, because the proposal to make the railway comes from the Government, and the Natives, of course, are the owners of the land. If the land belonged to the Europeans it would be a different thing. I have no desire whatever to oppose the Government, or to take away any authority from the Government. All I ask is that the Government and the Natives generally should manage affairs relating to the Maori If the Government take all the power themselves, and give the Natives none, then the Natives will be very suspicious. If the Government had all the power in their hands they might be arbitrary. They would say to the owners, "We want this particular piece of land: go you elsewhere." I believe, on the other hand, that if the whole power were placed in the hands of the Native Committees there would be abuses of that power also. It might be that there would be trouble between the persons employed to make the railway and the Native Committees. It seems to me to be necessary for the Government and the Natives generally to carry out all the arrangements. If mistakes were made or troubles arose these troubles could be brought to the House during next session. This is all I have to say.

Mr. STOUT.—Sir, I extremely regret that the Native members should have allowed themselves to be led away by somebody to make the speeches they have made to-night, and to block the business to no good end to their constituents or to the country. The question was not one of agreeing or disagreeing with the amendments. It was simply whether the reasons were proper reasons for submitting to another body. If this Bill passed in its present shape, the whole business of the North Island Trunk Railway would be stopped, and it would have to go to England for the Queen's assent. It was simply to make the Bill workable, and to stop private dealings in Maori land. No private dealings could then be prevented, and the very thing that Wahanui and the Natives asked to be carried out could not be done. By the obstructive course they are taking they are doing the very opposite to what they say they desire. I do not believe that they themselves would have done

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WESTLAND EDUCATION DISTRICT SUBDIVISION BILL.

this; and I do not blame them. been put up to this by some person. And they have also done this: They have, by talking beyond half-past twelve, succeeded in preventing us getting the Federation resolutions considered, and perhaps in delaying the pro-rogation of the House till next week. Sir, I hope that they will see that it is not for their advantage to take such a course as that. They ought not to attempt to threaten the Government in the way they did, that they would talk on unless an answer was given favourable to them. The honourable member for the Eastern Maori District did not know what he was talking about, or the nature of the amendment. I counsel him—and hope he will take it kindly that, before he again ventures to talk as he did to-night, he should ask some members in whom he can trust to make him acquainted with what is before the House. If he had done that I am sure he would not have talked as he has done to-night. I shall not say more, but again repeat that those opposing the motion were doing the very worst thing they possibly could for the Native race. Surely it is not to the interest of the Native race that there should be private dealings for their land. Yet, by the House agreeing to the amendments of the Legislative Council, the House would not stop private dealings with land; and I do not think the honourable member for Parnell saw what the amendments were, or he would not

Native Land Alienation

have taken the course he did. Mr. MOSS.—Allow me to state, in personal explanation, that I had no wish whatever to argue upon the Bill. I merely rose to show how excusable is what appears to me to be the wrong course taken by the honourable member (Mr. Te Ao). I thought he made a great mistake. I have not the pleasure of knowing the honourwords to him; but I felt for him and sympathized with him, and I got up to try and excuse the course he had taken. That was my object, and I am exceedingly sorry I was stopped from saying what I intended to say, because what I had to say was in the direction of excusing the honourable member.

Mr. STOUT. - Yes; for taking the wrong course.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past one o'clock a.m.

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Saturday, 8th November, 1884.

Westland Education District Subdivision Bill—Native Land Alienation Restriction Bill—Government Policy Measures—Greymouth Harbour Board Bill (No. 2)—Hokitika Steam-Tug Bill—Appropriation Bill—Immigration and Public Works Appropriation Bill.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past twelve o'clock.

PRAYERS.

Mr. Stout

The Hon. Mr. Wilson brought up the following report from the Free Conference on the Westland Education District Subdivision Bill:

"The Conference of the Managers of the Legislative Council and the House of Representatives agree to the following: (1.) That the two districts be subdivided as in the Bill passed by the House of Representatives. (2.) That a Board of seven members be appointed for the Westland District, three of the members to be appointed by the Governor. (3.) That a Commissioner or Commissioners be appointed as the Board of the Grey Education District. (4.) That the Act only remain in force, save as to clause 2, until the end of the next session of Parliament.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON moved, That the report be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

NATIVE LAND ALIENATION RESTRIC-TION BILL.

The Council considered the following reasons of the House of Representatives for disagreeing with the amendments of the Council in the Native Land Alienation Restriction Bill:

"That the power of the Crown to purchase land from a subject cannot be restricted except by a specific Act, which must be reserved for Her Majesty's consent. That the restriction proposed is not justified by experience. That, if any restriction is called for, there is no reason to suppose that Native Committees have yet attained the position which would justify the Legislature in placing them as arbiters between the owners of land and the

representatives of the Crown."

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—I move, That the Council doth not insist on its amend-With regard to the first reason of the House of Representatives, I think it is perfectly clear that this Bill, as amended by the Council, would have to be reserved for the sanction of Her Majesty, as a specific Act. The whole scope and object of the Bill was to prevent the alienation of land by the Natives within the territory through which the proposed railway will pass. As to the amend-ment regarding Native Committees, I confess that at the time it was made its importance did not strike me. But I find that these Native Committees have not worked up to the present. No one knows anything about their working—no one knows what their position may be—no one, in fact, knows anything about them. But I understand a compromise may be effected, in a manner suggested to me by my honourable friend Mr. Wilson, by the amendment as to Native Committees being struck out, and a provision which the Hon. Mr. Wilson suggests being inserted. I shall be dr. Whish suggests being inserted. I shall be quite prepared to accept his proposal, if the Council agrees not to insist on its amendments. If the Bill passes as it is, we may probably not be able to effect the very object for which it was introduced. I confess that, when the Bill was passing hurriedly through Committee, I



did not see the importance of the amendments made; but I think, if we look at the Constitution Act, we shall find that, in insisting on our amendments, we shall probably be doing something which will endanger the whole object of the Bill, which cannot be to the advantage of the country. I therefore hope the Council will not insist on the amendments

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE. — I know nothing whatever with reference to the proposed compromise, and of course I am not in a position to make any observations in reference to it. If there is to be a compromise, that compromise is only to be obtained in one way-that is, by the Council insisting upon its amendments, and the appointing of a conference between the two Houses, when the suggestion may be considered. But it appears to me that the course open to us is to insist upon the amendments made in the Bill, more especially for the reasons assigned. Regarding the first reason-" That the power of the Crown to purchase land from the subject cannot be restricted except by a specific Act, which must be reserved for Her Majesty's consent "-I should like, Sir, to know upon what basis that assumption is founded. We are, by our legislation, continually limiting the power of the Crown to buy. We are continually indicating in what direction they shall buy, and subject to what provisions. In the Public Works Act, which is not a specific Act, we limit the power of the We compel the Crown to buy according to certain limitations that we have laid down. That reason is not one which, I think, the Council can entertain for a moment. The second reason is, "That the restriction proposed is not justified by experience." Now, I entirely differ from the reasons assigned by the other branch of the Legislature. My honourable friend Mr. Mantell, who did so much towards the acquisition of land in the North Island, will, I am sure, tell you that it was in accord with somewhat such a plan as this that he proceeded with his negotiations; and I need not say that he had less trouble in acquiring the extensive blocks of land which were acquired by him in the other Island, and that these have been less the subject of dispute—except in one respect, where one agreement was departed from—than the purchases made in the North Island; and, as regards the North Island, the old plan used to be, on the part of the Government, to enter into negotiations with the recognized leaders of the hapus who were dwelling upon the land, and until that system was departed from I believe there were no serious disputes with regard to land. In the case of Waitara that principle was departed from, and those who were in possession of the land at the time were not negotiated with, and it was admitted aftenwards that a great mistake had been made at the time in that respect. There were people living upon the land at the time who had decisive interests in the land, which interests were eventually recognized.

An Hon. MEMBER.—No.
The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—My honourable friend is an authority upon these

subjects, but it is undoubted that they were living on the land—the evidence on that point was overpowering—and eventually the claim of those persons was acknowledged. As regards the North Island, something like the same principle was observed till lately, and great dissatisfaction has arisen of late years from the Government and others entering into dealings with outside persons, who were not recognized as having an interest in the land, and thus putting pressure on the real Native owners who occupied the land. The principle laid down in the amendment is one very desirable of continuation, and more especially in regard to the extensive tract of land included in the district defined in the schedule of the Bill. That district, to a great extent, is in possession of the Natives at the present time, and there is not even now free intercourse throughout that district; and, if we fail to recognize the Committee which, under the Act of last session, has been established in that district, I think we shall render our negotiations much more difficult of being brought to a successful issue, and perhaps very much complicate matters. I trust the Council will insist upon its amendments, and I beg leave to move, That the Council does

insist upon its amendments.

The Hon. the SPEAKER.—It is not necessary to put the amendment. I will put the question in the affirmative. The question is, That this Council does insist upon its amend-

The Hon. Dr. POLLEN.—Sir, I wish to say that the object of the Committee in making the recommendations which have been adopted by the Council in this Bill was not to impose any restrictions upon the action of the Government. On the contrary, it was the desire of the Committee, and upon consideration I am sure it may be made to appear to the Council that the amendments which the Committee recommended to be made in the Bill would absolutely tend, to promote the object which the Government had in view, the acquiring of lands within this district. We are all agreed that, when a work of the magnitude of the North Island Railway is about to be made, the action of all other persons excepting the Government should be prevented in that district; that no person, in the first instance, at any rate, until the policy of the Government in dealing with the land had been matured, should be authorized to deal with the land within the prescribed district. But, Sir, the feeling of the Natives is becoming so strong and so general with respect to the mode of dealing with their land that it would be prudent of the Government to con-sent to recognize the fact. The power which, under the authority of the law as it exists, individual Natives have to dispose of an indefinite share of any property has produced evils that I need not now stop to describe. The feeling of the Natives is positive and strong that, somehow or other, the continuance of this system must be stopped. We have heard of land leagues in the colony before now, and, although the consequences of such a league may not be of the magnitude they assumed on a former 488

occasion, yet we must recognize that it is quite possible that the Natives have still the facility for combination sufficiently strong amongst them to form another land league which would absolutely stop the Government from getting an acre of land within the prescribed limits. So far as we understand, the Natives in the southern part of the district are not at all unwilling to deal with the Government for the land required for this railway, and we have it upon the authority of the leading chief of the Ngatimaniapoto that, if the views of that tribe, of the large section of Native people he represents, are accepted in this simple matter of allowing them a voice in the management of their own affairs, in the northern district at least the Government will have no difficulty in acquiring the land they require. But if the Government set themselves, at this particular time, obstinately to ignore the views and desires of these people, then a land league will be formed in the whole district, and they will get no land at all; and, if the railway has to go through—and it will have to do so—it seems to me that it will have to be pushed through at the point of the bayonet; and that is a contingency which, I am sure, no one would like.

The Hon. Captain FRASER .- I heard what has been said by Mr. Pere about his amendments. I had a talk for over an hour with him, and I told him that I could not possibly agree with him, and that I should like to see the Government have entire control of the purchase of Native land. The Native member in another place has found out his mistake now, I believe, in endeavouring to force these amendments, and I understand that he has come quite round in the other direction. Something has been said of the purchase of the land in the Middle Island; but the honourable member was evidently not aware that, in purchasing a large portion of that Island, the Government came under certain obligations, and those obligations they have always avoided carrying out up to the present day; and they will not even allow the Natives to go into the Supreme Court, or it would be found that their obligations mean not hundreds of thousands, but millions of money. That is what the land was purchased for. We had no opportunity of getting land for an old musket. The land in Canterbury was paid £2 an acre for to the Government, and we paid £1 an acre for it in Otago. I trust the good sense of the Council will lead it to adopt the proposition that comes from the Government—that we do not insist upon our amendments. I think that is the wisest plan to adopt. Next session, if it is requisite to make a change, we can do so; but in the meantime I do trust the Council, whose only wish, I am sure, is to do what is just and right and proper, will not insist upon its amendments.

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND.-I do not wonder that a good deal of agitation has been felt within the walls of this building during the last few weeks, for no doubt there has been a system going on enough to alarm any legislative body—a system of lobbying and of button-holing quite unprecedented even in

this Assembly. I hope the Council will not allow itself to be put off the scent in this matter by references to Mr. Pere or to any other person whatever. What we have to do is to consider the effect of these resolutions, not who in any other place likes them; and I humbly venture to express the opinion that we shall be doing the best work possible for carrying out the object of this Bill — that is, for carrying the railway through this tract of land, and obtaining some reasonable concessions of land towards the maintenance of it-by organizing the land title; and generally organizing the population of the district by these amendments will very clearly assist in that way. Whoever may want confidence in a land company here or there, or in its agents, it is quite certain that a frank mode of meeting the Natives on the part of the Government at all times inspires confidence, and if, along with that, there is promptitude and exactitude in carrying out engagements, I venture to say we shall have no difficulty in connection with making the proposed line. I hope we shall be allowed to confer with the members of the other House upon this subject, and that the Council will not hastily undo what it has done. I have heard most of what is to be said out of doors on the subject, and I am bound to say it has not shaken me. Some gentlemen whose opinions on Native affairs I am always bound to look upon with great deference have expressed an opinion adverse to that of the Council; but, after the fullest reflection I have been able to give it, I find myself obliged to be at variance with them. I think we should endeavour to impress our views on the other House, and, if we cannot get them adopted as a whole, then to arrive at some sort of compromise in the matter which will really involve in it the essence of what we wish to do.

The Hon. Mr. McLEAN.—I do not think it is necessary now to go into a discussion as to Native land purchases in the Middle Island or the North Island, and as to who was right and who was wrong - these things must always remain more or less matters of opinion. I do not think, either, we need trouble our minds about this so-called lobbying we hear so much about. Surely honourable members are strongminded enough to look after themselves, and to use their own judgment in spite of anything they may hear in the lobbies. I am always glad for men to bring anything before me. I tell them I will look into it, but I never promise to support their views. Surely one can always hear both sides, and agree to what is right. The lobbying process does not trouble me a bit, and does not influence me one way or the other. I hope the Council will see its way not to insist on the amendments made in the Bill. They must have been come to in a very hurried manner, and without much consideration, because I happened to be out of the chamber for a few minutes talking to a gentleman, and in that time the whole thing was done. I was certainly surprised to see amendments of such serious character getting through the Council without a division, and I should certainly have

Hon. Dr. Pollen

recorded my vote against it if there had been a division. I do not believe the Government contemplate land-purchasing again. I, for one, positively object to it. First of all, they are not on an equality with private purchasers. Every one stuffs the Government with all that is bad, and others get all the good. That has been the history of the Government land-purchasing, and the money that has been said to be spent on land-purchases has not, in many cases, gone for that at all. As I said before, passing this Bill and constituting this large reserve will be the means of allowing the Goserve will be the means of anothing wernment to bring in a satisfactory Native Land Bill. They have now got an opportunity that has not occurred hitherto. I hope the Council will not insist on the amendments. I believe the Natives will give their assistance to the Government in making this line, and they ought to make a concession of a large block of land in consideration of the large value the making of the line will give their land.

The Hon. Mr. G. R. JOHNSON .- I hope the Council will not insist on the amendments, because an understanding seemed to have been arrived at between Wahanui and us that we should not interfere with the country within this particular district, and that we should leave to the chiefs of the tribes the entire control over it, until such time as the Natives ask for legislation regarding it. Now, the insertion of these amendments has just the effect of forcing one of our Acts, at any rate, on their district. If, indeed, this amendment is to be acted on at all, Native Committees in this district will have to be established under the Act of 1883, which has not yet been done in the

King country.

The Hon. Captain FRASER.—It is a dead-

letter.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—They have been appointed there, and gazetted. We have that distinctly in evidence from Wahanui him-

The Hon. Mr. G. R. JOHNSON.—Well, from all the information I can get, at any rate, the Committees so formed are not according to the ideas of the chiefs within that district. As far as I can gather, Wahanui himself has very different ideas as to Committees from those expressed by the Act of 1883. Of course we are to a certain extent in the dark in this matter. We can only act on the best information we can get. I must confess it is a very difficult subject to form an opinion on in the absence of full information, and under these circumstances I feel that the best plan is to leave the matter in the hands of the Government, and trust them to act with candour and decision-I think those were the terms used by the Hon. Mr. Richmond just now—as being likely to bring about a satisfactory settlement of any purchases that will be required in this particu-

The Hon. Mr. NGATATA.—Sir, I wish to say s few words on the matter now before the Council. I received a note from the chief Wahanui, explaining to me the nature of the amendments made in the Bill, and he asked

me to support those amendments when anv necessity arose for doing so in this Council. The main reason he had for saying so was that he wished the dealing with the land to be left in his own hands; and, when the Government desire to purchase lands from him, it should be made public to all the Natives having an interest in that part of the district, and when the Government desire to make a purchase it should interview the tribes of that district, and also make the matter known to the Committee of the district. It is not that he desires to retain permanent possession of that land, but he wishes to wait until the mode is made clear by which dealings can be undertaken, and then will be the time to open such negotiations. He has no fears about a railway passing through that district. They are quite clear on that point, and willing to allow it so to pass; but what they desire is that Native lands which have not been adjudicated upon, or for which the title has not been issued, should not be dealt with until some public arrangement has been come to. He also wishes that the system of advancing money to individual Natives should be put a stop to, and they wish that, in all purchases in these blocks, there should be only one mode, and that should be publicly made known to all those interested. These are the wishes of the Natives, and for that reason I will support the amendments made by the Council in this Bill.

The Council divided on the question, "That the amendments be insisted on."

AYES, 12. Barnicoat Kohere Pollen. Chamberlin Mantell Richmond, J. C. Hart Ngatata Waterhouse Williamson. Johnston, J. Pharazyn Noes, 18.

Dignan Peacock Acland Baillie Fraser Peter Reeves Henderson Bonar Johnson, G. R. Reynolds Brandon Buckley, G. Lahmann Scotland Buckley, P. A. McLean Wilson.

Majority against, 6.

GOVERNMENT POLICY MEASURES. The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—I wish, Sir, to call attention to a matter of privilege in connection with the reporting of the debates of this Council. It will be in the remem-brance of the Council that some time ago—on the 27th of last month—I asked a question of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary with reference to certain measures on which the policy of the Government had been announced in the other branch of the Legislature, in the shape of resolutions that had been brought forward there. I asked, Sir, this question; I received a reply; and I made an observation based upon that When the slip of Hansard was sent to me, I noticed that my question was correctly reported, and that the observation I made, based upon the reply that the Colonial Secretary made, was likewise correctly reported; but the reply itself was entirely dropped out

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of the report. I called the attention of the Chief of the Reporting Staff to the fact. He, however, stated that no such reply had been made. I told him that was entirely erroneous; that every member in the Council heard the reply; that no person could have been present at the time without hearing the reply. Nevertheless, he insisted upon adhering to the report of his staff, and the result is that Hansard appears without its containing the reply given by the Colonial Secretary. Now, Sir, when I called attention to the resolutions that had been laid before the other branch of the Legislature, and when I asked the question in regard to them, the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, rising in his place, in reply to the question I had asked, said something to the effect—I cannot wouch for the exact words; perhaps honourable gentlemen here present will find their memories serve them better than mine - but he said words to the effect that he knew nothing whatever regarding those resolutions. And upon that I based my observation—"I presume, in that case, the question has not been considered in the Cabinet." If there was . a reply made of that character, my observation was perfectly clear; but, if there was no reply made to me, my observation is alto-gether incoherent and incomprehensible. I should not have taken notice of this had the whole affair dropped out of Hansard: it was of an unimportant character; but I do take exception to its being served up in this incomplete shape, more especially after attention had been called to the circumstance. If the session had not arrived at so late a period I should move that the matter be referred to the Reporting Debates Committee, that it might be inquired into and reported upon. I am sure the Council will bear me out in my statement that there was a reply distinctly made to my question, and I am sure that my honourable friend the Colonial Secretary would not have been so wanting in ordinary courtesy as to have failed

to give a reply.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Sir, that the honourable gentleman did put the question is perfectly correct; but he must have misunderstood me if from any expression of mine he could have supposed for a moment that I gave him the answer that I knew nothing about the resolutions—the statement. I was perfectly aware of the statement, but I asked my honourable friend to what statement he referred; and, if in any expression of mine I conveyed to him the information that I did not know anything about that statement, he must have misunderstood me. I wanted the honourable gentleman to make his question distinct, in order to give a distinct answer; and it is quite clear that the honourable gentleman did say, at the time, "I presume it has not been considered in the Cabinet." I may say that the statement to which my honourable friend referred had been considered in the Cabinet, and that I knew all about it; but I was not going to give him an answer, without notice, to an important question of that character. I can assure the honourable gentleman that he is mistaken if

he supposes that I said that I did not know anything about the statement in the House. do not know how the matter was reported in Hansard. I very rarely correct any speeches made by me. I am quite satisfied that the reporters, as a rule, have taken down correctly every word I say; and I only wish other honourable members were taken down in the same way almost verbatim. I think we have a very fine collection of reports, which no doubt, in time to come, will be of great advantage to the colony.

The Hon. Mr. MANTELL.—I was only going to say that, sitting where I do, in close proximity to the Hon. Mr. Buckley, the impression conveyed to my ears and mind was that the honourable gentleman said that he knew no-thing at all about the statement. It only shows within how short a distance refraction of

sound and meaning may take place.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS.—Sir, I was sitting next to my colleague, and what I understood was that he said, simply in a jocular way, "What statement? I know nothing at all about it." I heard him say that distinctly.

GREYMOUTH HARBOUR BOARD BILL

(No. 2).
The Hon. the SPEAKER.—Before putting the question, That this Bill be read a second time, I think it is my duty to state, as the preamble sets out that it is necessary in consequence of a clerical error, that that clerical error did not occur with the officers of this department. I think it right, in their defence, to say that, whenever there is an error committed by them, the officers of this House will always be ready to acknowledge it. I think very strong language has been made use of against them, and I think it is only my duty towards the officers to say that that error did not originate with them.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY,—In moving the second reading of this Bill, I may say that I am much pleased to listen to the remarks you, Sir, have been good enough to make with regard to the officers of this Council. I am quite sure that every one in the Council would bear testimony to the able manner and the accuracy with which they conduct the business. I am pleased to say that, from the experience I have had; and I think that would be the verdict of every member of the Council. The object of the Bill is to correct a clerical error, which is, in reality, I believe, a printers' error. In the 8th section of the Act which was passed a few days ago, and on which we heard so many able speeches and had so much discussion, the sum of £50,000 seems to have been omitted. In the original Bill the sum was £200,000: that was amended so as to make it not more than £150,000; and I have here in my hands the proof copy, which was sent to the Printer, which bears the name—I am not sure that it is not the signature—of the Colonial Treasurer. certifying to the accuracy of the alteration made. It appears, so far as I am able to understand, that the Printer, by some accident, omitted the words "and fifty." The sole object

Hon. Mr. Waterhouse



of the Bill is to correct that error. I have this from the Printer for the purpose of honourable members seeing it, so as to satisfy themselves that it was a mistake; and I ask them to consent to the second reading of the Bill.

Bill read a second and a third time.

#### HOKITIKA STEAM-TUG BILL.

The Hon. Mr. LAHMANN moved, That the amendments proposed by His Excellency the Governor in the Hokitika Steam-Tug Bill be agreed to.

The Hon. Mr. BONAR moved the adjourn-

ment of the debate.

The Council divided on the question, "That the debate be adjourned."

#### AYES, 8.

Baillie Barnicoat Bonar

Buckley, G. Waterhouse Chamberlin Wilson. Richmond, J. C.

#### Noes, 12.

Buckley, P. A. Henderson Lahmann Johnson, G. R. Peacock Dignan Fraser Johnston, J. Reynolds Grace Kohere Scotland.

Majority against, 4. Amendments agreed to.

#### APPROPRIATION BILL.

This Bill was read a first, a second, and a third time.

#### IMMIGRATION AND PUBLIC WORKS APPROPRIATION BILL.

Bill read a first time.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY. — Sir, in moving the second reading of this Bill, I take what I understand to be the ordinary course in this Council, and move the Bill pro forma, so as to afford honourable members who may wish to discuss the policy of the Government an opportunity for making what is generally understood to be a financial statement. I have no wish to depart from that well-recognized course, and I move, That the Bill be read a second time.

The Hon. Mr. WATERHOUSE.—Did I hear the honourable member say he intended to

make a financial statement?

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY .-- No; but that I wished to afford honourable members an opportunity for making one. I hope my honourable friend will not again misunderstand me, as he did on a former occasion. I stated that I wished to afford honourable members an opportunity of making what is understood to be a financial statement.

The Hon. Mr. WILSON.—Honourable members on this side will be decidedly disappointed if they do not have a financial statement from my honourable friend Mr. Reynolds. When he was in opposition he gave them, and I do hope he will now favour us with his opinion on the finances of the country

The Hon. Mr. J. C. RICHMOND.—I will answer for my honourable friend, and say a few words on the occasion. I cannot believe

that it would be right for this Council to be absolutely dumb on the general bearing of the finances of the Government on this very memorable session — a session memorable, I hope, beyond all to follow it, and certainly remarkably memorable beside some of the most notable we have experienced before. We spent, of course, a great deal of time and had some singular negotiations before we at length arrived at the present Government; and, so far as we can judge, it seemed to be arrived at, and is continued, by reason of its financial policy; and no doubt it is fair and right that we should understand, and that the country should know as far as we are able to enlighten it, what the nature of that policy is. The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer did not think it right, I believe, to refer to the past in his Financial Statement, but he stated that he had allowed us to look for that to the Statement of his predecessor. But we know that the colony was stated to be in a condition of great depression, the revenue showing a considerable deficit, and many industries being in a very critical condition. The railways were yielding less and costing more than during previous years, and the Customs revenue was in a distinctly declining state. I know, of course, that no one would have a right to find fault with the present Govern-ment, nor, indeed, do I think they would have a right to find fault with their predecessors, for this state of the revenue; but I think we ought to open our eyes to one fact respecting it: that this depression of the Customs revenue is not a transitory affair, but has been going on for some time. The people may be deceived some-times by a small apparent increase of the total yield; but, when they take that cheerful view—which it is too much the habit of people in the colony to take—they forget that, whilst. the population has been rising in numbers, the Customs revenue has been only stagnant. look at figures and I observe that, between the year 1881 and the present year, there has been a falling-off in three years, notwithstanding the increase of the population, from £1,421,000 to £1,417,000, at the same time that the population has increased 12 per cent.: that was about the estimated amount—the statistical tables do not enable us to say what it would be this year. If we calculate what the Customs revenue would have been if it had increased with the population, instead of the revenue being £1,417,000 we shall see that it ought to have been £1,705,000. That decline of the revenue is well worthy of attention, and we see similar indications in other points. The imports are growing, but the exports are keeping almost stagnant: that is to say, as I interpret it, that the surplus-producing power of the colony is not increasing, although the population is increasing. Of course this arises from many causes, and I should like to state them frankly. I have no desire to attack anybody in the matter; I only wish to put my opinions before the Council, and they can follow them out as far as they like. One reason why the increase of population does not increase the exports is the constant growth of the working. population which is to some extent unemployed, and a great deal of it employed in works which do not appear in any shape in exports. That, of course, does not necessarily mean any harm. There is another reason to be fairly taken into account, and that is that the sexes increase in proportion, and that we may assume that females are not so much producers for export as the men: of course they are not. And, with respect to the declining Customs revenue, I should like to make one I have noticed that there is a very remark. steady decline of revenue from drink—from spirits. One cannot but think that this is due to the work of the Good Templars and the Blue Ribbon Army: some may laugh at them, but I cannot but think that they are doing the most honourable work that could be desired. The actual falling-off in the Customs revenue is about 2 per cent. on the previous year, but relatively to the population it is 12 per cent. In these observations I have taken the four last quarters to make up the year, though one does not belong to it, to compare it; and I observe in the last quarter a very large sum which has abnormally arisen from a very large drawing-out of bond of sugar, in anticipation, I am informed, of the possible raising of the sugar duties. However that may be, it is certain that a very considerable sum was due last quarter, and if that were deducted the appearance of the year's revenue would not be so good as I have stated. We hear of the unso good as I have stated. employed, and we are told that we are to make railways to solve the "unemployed" question: that is what one of the advocates of the East. and West Coast Railway gave as one of the great reasons for the work. And we have a very unfortunate prospect for the grain trade: that is to say that usually the prices in London for our New Zealand grain are such as do not pay the expense of production except under most extraordinary circumstances. We are most extraordinary circumstances. bound to act as though the grain business was not a permanent one in this country. I will state one or two facts about our industries that are important for consideration in forming an estimate of the state of the nation. I have abstracted from papers facts as to the mining, agricultural, and pastoral industries. I find, as we are all aware, that we have been going back for the last ten or eleven years with the gold duty. The export has declined from nearly £2,000,000 in 1874 to £892,000 in the present year. Gold-mining is a declining industry, and we cannot look to it with any confidence for an increase; the chances are very much against it. The West Coast, and indeed the whole of Otago, have been pretty well pro-spected, and it is improbable, though not impossible, that any very large find will be made there. During these ten or eleven years the gold export was £13,000,000, and during the same period the exports of the much-abused pastoral industry amounted to £38,000,000—nearly three times the amount of the gold; and it has been, on the whole, a steady industry. appears to have culminated at present, and, unless some great good is to be gained by laying

down large areas in European grasses or growing some new kind of produce, or something of which I can form no anticipation, that industry cannot expand very much more. Other subsidiary industries have expanded. such, for instance, as the Auckland exports of timber and gum; and an industry in dairy produce seems to be springing up. Considering the climate and the nature of the country, there seems a probability of success in this latter direction, but we find that the export on that account amounts as yet to only £38,000 out of a total of six millions a year. Now, my object in putting these figures before the Council is to point out this: that there are industries that are natural and reliable, and that we can depend upon to a considerable extent; and there are others that are natural too, but, I think, not reliable, and on which we cannot depend, through many accidents over which we have no control, and therefore we cannot base our calculations on them in our estimates for the future. Of course our railway revenue depends very much on our corn export, and a very large amount of the railway receipts every year has been derived from that The amount derived from that source source. will next year be certainly very materially reduced. There is another thing I wish to point out to the Council and, I may say, to the country. I have often been astonished that no one in this Council, and very few in the Legislature, have attempted in any degree seriously to estimate what remains in the colony for expanding. We ought surely to make some estimate—it may be imperfect, but at all events it would be better than merely going on blindly — we ought to make some estimate of the capabilities of the country in which we live. I am bound to say I do not believe that this country is one calculated to bear a very large population. I do not say that it will not increase in population very largely as compared with the number of our people now; but that it will take rank among the large and fertile countries in the world I cannot believe. I am bound, after a long residence in it, and after examining almost every part of the country, to say frankly what I believe is the state of the case. It is a comparatively barren country, blessed with an exceedingly fine climate, and some patches of very fine land; but, as a whole, it is mainly destined to continue a pastoral country. Well, that consideration is always before me when I look on such schemes as the Government have brought down to us. They are not new; they are not different in kind, only in degree, from those which we have been carrying out in the past. I do not make any attack upon my honourable friends opposite on the Government They are as innocent as the babe unborn, as innocent as I myself. And what has been going on? A large number of the people in the country heartily welcome these schemes. They hope, no doubt, for what is called a "spurt," and everybody hopes he may not be the last when that spurt arrives. But I venture to tell my honourable friends opposite, and whoever may see or read my words, that the

Hon. Mr. J. C. Richmond

course of any "spurt" will be very short. Its first appearance will be almost the day of its death. Those wanting to sell out and go elsewhere will find themselves in the position of John Hobbs when wanting to sell his wife. Nobody wanted Jane Hobbs. That will be Nobody wanted Jane Hobbs. That will be the case with our next "spurt." It is a wild hope, which I do not suppose the Colonial Treasurer or my honourable friend the Colonial Secretary entertains, that the "spurt" may be of any duration. It is almost a certainty that the depression must continue for some time, varied by the "spurt" we speak of. In these circumstances, what is it the Government propose to do? I have made a note of a few things. They insist, first of all, upon establishing a balance between revenue and expenditure by stopping the Sinking Fund. Well, that is a very pretty prize. The next is a much more important and good thing, and that is the conversion of loans. But the value of this depends entirely upon our credit, upon the conviction in the money-market that we are sound, and that we are going on sound lines. Otherwise conversion will not take place, or, if it does, it will not be on such terms as we see stated in papers laid before the Council. Then we come to the railways. Now, these, I am bound to say, as far as I have been able to ascertain of them, are all poor. They, too, serve as a diluent of the property we now possess, and every hundred miles we add will take off so much per cent. proportionately of the revenue we now derive from them, because the traffic must be less than on the existing lines, while the cost of working will be the same. We know that the larger the traffic the smaller, proportionately, is the cost of working. We may put down 4 per cent. increase of liability for all the money we spend on railways: 1½ per cent. net is as much as the whole of the railways will yield. Then, as to harbours, they are confessedly not to be immediately remunerative: no one expects all these harbour works to return anything for a couple of years at any rate. Then, there is a proposal to galvanize up an industry in beet sugar, the cost of which, if successful, will be £70,000 a year in the shape of decreased Customs revenue, unless we put on an Excise duty — which I think is one of the worst ways of raising revenue. Then, there is the South Sea trade. It is rumoured that in another place there was a Bill for working a great South Sea bubble, as it was called; and I have heard it was intended to amend the preamble by substituting for it the preamble of the original South Sea scheme; and, according to appearances, that would have been very suitable. That scheme, however, is replaced now, I am told, by a bonus to be given to a steam service. Last of all—and, I say, worst of all, in the present state of the country — there is the reduction of the property-tax. The object the reduction of the property-tax. of that, if I could conceive of an object, was, I suppose, to lead people outside to imagine we are not hard up. It is like the man who put on the best clothes he could find because he had no money to pay for them, and who hoped more from appearing well-dressed than appear-

There is no economy that I can ing shabby. hear of in the current expenditure—and I am sorry my honourable friend the economist of the Government (Mr. Reynolds) is not in the chamber. Yes; there was a little proposition for a reduction in the education vote, which was dropped upon a very slight protest from all round that that was the last thing that should be touched. For, if there is anything in the country that gives us hope for the future, it must be that our working population, all our population, should be increasingly educated, and any change in the Education Act ought to go in the direction of making it more liberal, and of holding out our hands to those who at present decline to take part in the system, but stand aloof, and whose active co-operation would re-lieve us of part of our burden. There was one economy—they saved £100 in the salary of a legislative officer. What, then, are the new borrowings based upon? They are based upon air, like "the baseless fabric of a vision." The money will come, no doubt, but we shall practically get very little for it, and we shall have to pay interest for what we get. This attempt we are making, this constant desire to force on the country, is vicious in itself. It disturbs the natural course of industry. It helps to keep labour at prohibitive prices. I do not say I grudge the price of labour; I pay my share with the greatest goodwill. But, if you expect to induce new industries—if you expect old ones to go on so as to yield a revenue and to make the country wealthy—you will be disappointed. It is idle to say that this policy of unprofitable public works will not contribute towards the damage of those that are profitable. I refer not only to the railways, but to the works of the country generally. Another thing I am bound to say, though this may be called inexact philosophy. I am bound to say that the large influxes of money not earned are demoralizing to the whole community. They raise the normal value of property; there is no fixed property in the country on which there is not a fictitious value. Every one is aware of this, but so fond are we of this patent self-blow-up, in which our great leader is foremost, that we pay property-tax on exaggerated values rather than appear to be less wealthy than we are. There is a general unbelief throughout the Legislature; I believe you can hardly lay your hands upon ten members of the Houses combined who do not heartily disbelieve in these quackeries. I am convinced that this is the case; the smile is on every lip when you talk about these things. The Legislature takes the first step, is foremost, in its demoralization—I hope I am not trespassing upon order in saying such a thing: it is the foremost, and if any one wanted to attack it in the rudest terms, I, for one, should not be able to stand up and defend If it were said that we are "infamous and contented," I could only reply that we are not contented.

The Hon. Mr. G. BUCKLEY.—I should like to say a few words on the subject of immigra-tion. I am not against a sum being expended upon immigration; but I think it has been the

case for a long time that there has not been proper care taken in the selection of people sent out to this colony at the expense of the Government, and I am sure at present we cannot afford to spend money for this purpose unless care is taken. I will only mention what came under my notice lately. I came out very recently with 150 persons, who, I believe, were aided by the Government of the country, a portion of their passage-money being paid for them. From inquiry I have reason to believe that very little trouble was taken as to the approval of the persons before they left Plymouth, and my own observation during the passage confirms this. I should say, in the first place, that perhaps not more than onehalf of those who came had ever seen domestic service, or proposed to be domestic servants, and I understand that Government aid is only given to that class of people at the present time; and I can say that I think it would have been as well had one-half of them been left behind. Of course, if they came out at their own expense, it would be a different matter; but I do not think they are a suitable class to be brought out at the expense of the colony. So far as I am able to judge from inquiry, there appears to be an entire want of selection in the approval of these persons; it appears they are taken entirely upon the certificates given. I will go a little further, and say that very recently, I believe, out of the number of women at the dépôt to embark for New Zealand, there were two found to be suffering from a most loathsome disease. They were not sent on board the vessel, but were rejected; but not only had they certificates from clergymen, but from most respectable people, and, had it not been for the medical men noticing the state of these women, they would have been sent out. Bill read a second and a third time.

The Council adjourned at half-past six ·o'clock p.m.

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Saturday, 8th November, 1884.

Third Reading—Westland Education District Sub-division Bill—Walton Park Railway—Sale of Wellington Provincial Buildings—Upper Wai-taki Bridge—Postal Union—Ruapekapeka Burial-ground—Monument to Epuni—Examiner of Standing Orders—Stationery—Waikato Militia— Hansard—District Railways—Privilege—Appro-priation Bill—Annexation and Federation.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER took the chair at halfpast two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

#### THIRD READING.

Immigration and Public Works Appropriation Bill.

WESTLAND EDUCATION DISTRICT SUBDIVISION BILL.

Mr. STOUT intimated that the Conference

Hon. Mr. G. Buckley

that morning, and agreed to the following compromise:

"The Conference of the Managers of the Legislative Council and the House of Representatives agree to the following: (1.) That the two districts be subdivided as in the Bill passed by the House of Representatives. (2.)
That a Board of seven members be appointed
for the Westland District, three of the members to be appointed by the Governor. (3.) That a Commissioner or Commissioners be appointed as the Board of the Grey Education District. (4.) That the Act only remain in force, save as to clause 2, until the end of the next session of Parliament."

On the motion of Mr. STOUT the report was agreed to.

#### WALTON PARK RAILWAY.

Mr. BARRON asked the Government, Whether they will make provision for the extension of the Walton Park Branch Railway to Lower Kaikorai Bridge? During the present session he presented to the Minister for Public Works a petition from the Chairman and members of the Seaside District Road Board, asking for the extension of the railway indicated in the question. The Minister, in reply, informed the Road Board that he would cause inquiries to be made to ascertain whether the Government would be warranted in undertaking the work. The Road Board, evidently desirous that the work should be undertaken during the present session if possible, and doubtless observing that provision had been made on the estimates for the construction in other parts of the colony of some works not more likely to pay than this, had sent a telegram, which, unfortunately, reached him (Mr. Barron) after the estimates had been passed, and too late to enable him to bring the matter again under the notice of the Minister in time for Supply. This was the telegram :-

"I am instructed by the Seaside District Road Board to request that you will be pleased to ask the Government to place a sum of money on the estimates for the extension of the Walton Park Branch Railway to Lower Kai-korai Bridge."

Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that, since the honourable gentleman had brought this matter forward, he had caused a report to be made upon the proposed extension, and the Engineer who had examined the district stated that this was not a work that he could recommend the Government to undertake at present.

#### SALE OF WELLINGTON PROVINCIAL BUILDINGS.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Government,—
(1.) If the purchase money of the property lately sold by the Government to the Insurance Department was determined upon after competent and independent valuation? (2.) If it is intended to set aside the said purchase-money for the purpose of erecting premises suitable for the several Government departments now Mr. STOUT intimated that the Conference of both Houses in reference to this Bill met cial Buildings," and which has been sold?

With reference to this question, he might say that a proviso in the Special Powers and Contracts Bill, hurriedly read, caused him to think that the Government would retain an interest in this property. But he found that he had jumped to a wrong conclusion; and therefore he was the more concerned to see that a proper price was paid. Taking the buildings at the low valuation of £5,000—he believed they cost £8,000 or £10,000—he found that the land was sold at a price equal to about £75 per foot, a price which, in asking the question, he could only criticise by informing the House that land had lately been sold in the same street—one block, with a frontage of 88ft., at a price equal to £112 per foot; and another block, with a frontage of 40ft., at a price equal to £175 per foot. With regard to the latter part of the question, he could only hope that the several Government departments would not be put to inconvenience by this sale, and that permanent premises would shortly be erected for them.

Sir J. VOGEL might explain to the House the circumstances under which this purchase was made. And, first, he might state that the purchase was made subject to the House passing the necessary vote. It had been found, for some time past, that the officers in the Insurance Department were very much cramped for want of room, and that it was necessary to have a strong-room. The other departments in the building also required strong-rooms. It was estimated that a sum of £2,000 would be necessary to provide the extra accommodation required. The late Government had had under consideration the question of selling this building to the Insurance Department, and a valuation was taken of it, which amounted to £12,500, and which was subsequently increased to £15,000. When he went into the question it became evident to him that it was absolutely necessary, for the protection of the books, &c., of the department, that some arrangement should be immediately made with a view to providing a strong-room. It seemed to him a very desirable purchase on the part of the Insurance Department. A fresh valuation was taken, which showed that £16,000 would be a fair price for the Government to obtain; and the matter was fully discussed in Cabinet. It appeared that the buildings originally cost £6,800. It also seemed that £4,000 was a sufficient amount to cover their present value. With regard to the value of the land, he might state that the block adjoining, every bit as well suited, containing double the quantity of land, and with more frontages, and a large stone store on the land, was valued at £30,000, which was considered a large valuation. The land referred to in this question was only half the extent, with but three frontages, and a wooden building upon it. The Government, however, were offered £16,000 from another quarter, and determined not to let the property go for less than £18,000. The Insurance Department, on consideration, resolved to give the amount asked. It was agreed to buy the building, subject, as he had said, to the vote of the House. With regard to the second part of the ques-

tion, there would be sufficient accommodation for the departments now in the building if the Government were willing to pay a reasonable price for the same. The probability was that the Government would prefer to do so to put-ting up a new building. The Government thought the House would not be inclined to spend extra money on buildings at present in Wellington. He might say, as far as his own opinion was concerned, that, when new buildings were to be constructed in Wellington for the Government, the one most urgently required, he considered, would be a new Printing Office. As to setting aside the money, it would not be possible to ear-mark any particular sum. The amount would be paid into the bank in the ordinary way, to the credit of the Con-solidated Fund. He thought it would be found that the Government had received a good price for the building, and it was one well suited for the Insurance Department.

UPPER WAITAKI BRIDGE. Mr. DUNCAN asked the Minister for Public Works, If he will authorize the planking of the Upper Waitaki Bridge, so that children on the north side of the river can get to the school on

the south side in safety?
Mr. E. RICHARDSON replied that the two local bodies had subscribed a considerable sum towards the cost of the bridge, and the Government also paid a portion of the cost. Only a very small expenditure would be required to render the bridge safe, not only for children, but for other purposes, and he proposed to have the work done.

POSTAL UNION.

Mr. GUINNESS asked the Postmaster-General, Whether he will, during the recess, cause inquiries to be made as to the probable cost of this colony joining the Postal Union

and foreign parcels post?

Sir J. VOGEL said that this question had over and over again been considered by the department; but it had not been deemed expedient for the colony to join the Union. The calculation would, of course, vary from time to time, according to the amount received for postages; but the whole subject was familiar to the department. He believed that none of the colonies had seen their way to join the Union. If the honourable gentleman desired next session that an estimate should be made, it would be easy to get the return by motion, and it would then contain the latest information.

### RUAPEKAPEKA BURIAL-GROUND.

Mr. HAKUENE asked the Government, Whether they will take immediate steps to reserve and fence in the burial-ground of the officers and soldiers who fell at the fight at Ruapekapeka, or remove the remains to the cemetery at Russell, as a homestead settler is levelling the mounds and ploughing up the land? He asked the question because he was sorry to see the graves of the soldiers who fell during the war being desecrated.

Mr. STOUT said the Government were obliged

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to the honourable member for having called attention to the matter. They would see that steps were taken to do what he suggested.

#### MONUMENT TO EPUNI.

Mr. WAKEFIELD said that, following up the question just put by Mr. Hakuene, he would like to ask if the Government would see that the monument erected to the memory of the late chief Epuni was put in order. He was out at Pitone the other day, and he observed that the whole place was broken down, and that the graves were in a disgraceful state.

and that the graves were in a disgraceful state.

Mr. STOUT said he would bring the matter under the notice of the department.

### EXAMINER OF STANDING ORDERS.

Mr. SHRIMSKI said that, when the salary of this officer was under consideration in Committee of Supply the other evening, the Committee reduced it by £100. As the member who had moved the reduction, it was not his desire, nor did he think it was the desire of honourable members who voted for it, that the reduction should take place as from the beginning of the financial year; but he understood that this would be the effect. He hoped that the Government would make arrangements to pay this officer his salary at the full rate up to the end of this month. It would not be right to make the decision of the House retrospective.

Sir J. VOGEL thought that it would perhaps meet the desire of the House if the reduction took effect from the beginning of next year. If the decision of the House were strictly enforced it would refer back to the beginning of the financial year—the beginning of April—and it was possible that the Controller would call upon this officer for a refund of payments already made to him. The Government would pay the old rate of salary up to the beginning of January, charging the excess over the amount voted by the House to "unauthorized" expenditure.

#### STATIONERY.

Mr. LARNACH asked the Government if they would consider the advisability of procuring telegraph-forms and envelopes required for the use of the public service in the colony. Several paper-manufactories were already established in the colony by private enterprise, and he thought the Government should assist them as far as possible, in the manner indicated.

as far as possible, in the manner indicated.

Sir J. VOGEL said the question gave him the opportunity of saying that the Government wished to do everything that could be done to obtain all stores within the colony, instead of importing them, where it was practicable to do so. The question of telegraph-forms had been under consideration, but there was at present a very large stock in hand. However, in the course of a short time the Government would call for tenders for a fresh supply, and give six or seven months' notice, in order to enable intending tenderers to make their arrangements. As regarded envelopes, the same remarks would apply. It seemed to him that the fact that tenders in the

colony were usually much higher than those from Home was due in a measure to the circumstance that the Government obtained their stores free of duty, and did not take into account the fact that local tenderers paid duty on the articles they introduced in a raw state for the purposes of manufacture. The Government would do all they could to encourage local productions.

#### WAIKATO MILITIA.

Mr. SEDDON asked the Government if they would make inquiries in reference to the case of a gentleman who had served in the Waikato Regiment, who was known to have served there by Colonel Fraser and Captain Morris, members of the House, and who wore the war medal for services he had rendered, but who was not mentioned in the returns prepared by the Defence Department, and whose name was stated not to be on the books of the department. It was evident that an injustice had been done to an old servant, who had done good service, and he hoped the Premier would look into the matter.

Mr. STOUT said that, if the honourable gentleman would write to the Defence Department on the subject, the matter would be looked into.

#### HANSARD.

Mr. MACANDREW would like to know what steps the Government had taken, or intended to take, with reference to the compilation of speeches made in Parliament before the date of the publication of Haward.

of the publication of Hansard.

Mr. STOUT replied that, before this matter was mentioned in the House, the matter had been brought under his notice by a letter from Mr. FitzGerald, the Controller-General, who pointed out the desirability of something being done in the matter; and Mr. Maurice FitzGerald, a son of the Controller, offered to do the work without receiving any remuneration for it, but when it was finished the Government might give him a gratuity or a bonus for the work. On learning that he was willing to do the work in that way, he (Mr. Stout) had asked Mr. Maurice FitzGerald to cellect materials, and he would submit the reports to Parliament and ask for authority to have them printed.

#### DISTRICT RAILWAYS.

Mr. ROLLESTON asked, without notice, whether the Government would, during the first week of next session, place upon the table a return, as promised by the Premier, giving full particulars with regard to the district railways, the capital of the companies, the shareholders ratepayers. &c.

shareholders, ratepayers, &c.
Mr. STOUT was not aware that a list of the shareholders had been promised; but all particulars would be given to the House in connection with any railway with regard to which

a contract was made.

#### PRIVILEGE.

Mr. JOYCE.—Sir, I wish to bring before the House a question of privilege. Twelve days ago a letter appeared in the Wellington morning newspaper reflecting on my conduct as a member of the House. I did not think it worth taking notice of. But this letter, purporting to be written by a constituent of mine, had been sent down and published in my district; and I think this rendered it necessary to obtain a contradiction, which I think I may easily do. The letter is as follows:—

"AN ELECTOR'S SUGGESTIONS.—Under the above title there appears in the New Zealand Times of 27th ult. a letter signed 'Awarua Elector,' and dated from One-Tree Point. It runs as follows: 'We down south are very sorry to learn that the member for Invercargill and the member for Kumara do not seem to be on the most friendly terms; but there are other considerations. And further, if the member for Awarua was to mind his constituents' interest, and not stuff the member for Kumara with a batch of rubbish, there would be no necessity for the electors of the Awarua placing themselves in communication with the member for Invercargill to do their business and present their wishes to Parliament. There is another thing quite certain—namely, that the member for Awarua and the member for Kumara had better fraternize all they can this Parliament, for it is very doubtful whether they will ever meet again in Wellington as members of Parliament."

At first I thought this letter was written by the honourable member for Invercargill, because he had a few days before written a highly offensive letter, with his name to it, to the Municipal Council of Invercargill, imputing dishonourable motives to me in connection with my action on the Invercargill Reserves Bill. However, I have reason to believe that he did not write this letter, and presently, perhaps, we shall have his assurance. I should like him to state, in his place here, how far the statements in the letter are within his knowledge correct, and, if he pleases to do so, to disclaim the authorship of this letter. As I only wish to put myself right with my constituents, I do not desire to take the extreme step of moving that the publishers of the newspapers be summoned to the bar of the House. To put myself in order I beg to move, That the paragraph be

Mr. SEDDON.—I beg to second that motion. I think it would be only manly on the part of the honourable member for Invercargill to state to the House that he knows nothing of the paragraph. With reference to my connection with the matter, I may say that I gave the honourable gentleman, in confidence, my authority. I never mentioned his name in connection with the person named Bridges who committed suicide at Riverton.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER.—This is no ques-

tion of privilege.

Mr. SEDDON. — Well, Sir, I will refer to what appears in the letter, about my being stuffed by the honourable member for Awarua, and I say that he has never said a single word to me reflecting on the honourable member for Invercargill. When this letter appeared in the New Zealand Times I met the honourable

member for Invercargill coming from the Wai rarapa train, and he said that he very much regretted that this paragraph had appeared, and that he knew nothing about it. I then gave him the source of my information, which I derived from a former resident at Invercargill who is now settled on the West Coast. I received the letter in a jocular way, and used it in a jocular way, and never expected that it would be used by the people of Invercargill against the honourable member for Awarua. I should not be manly if I did not state that he was not the person who gave me the information. I ask the honourable member for Invercargill to disclaim any connection with this letter.

Motion for reading the paragraph negatived. Mr. HATCH.—I should like to make a personal explanation. I never saw this letter until I read it in the paper, and was very much surprised and annoyed that it should have been reproduced. As to any person living at One-Tree Point writing to me to do business instead of to the honourable member for Awarua, I beg to deny it, and have to say that I have received no letter from any person there. I only regret that the honourable member for Awarua should have referred to me as he did in the first part of his remarks. I suppose this paragraph went to Invercargill as other paragraphs in newspapers do, and the people there very stupidly put it in. The honourable member for Kumara did not give me his authority for the statement he made.

Mr. JOYCE.—I beg to ask whether the "J. Hatch and Co.," of Invercargill, who have a contract for supplying phosphorized oats, is the J. Hatch who is a member of this House; and, if so, will the Government take proceedings against the same honourable member under "The Disqualification Act, 1878"? Under that Act the honourable gentleman is liable to a penalty of £50 for every day that he sits and votes in this House, and it is out of consideration for the honourable gentleman that I give him the opportunity of receding from the position. I have no desire to proceed myself for the penalty, and it might be as well, before we part, to pass an Indemnity Act to whitewash and purify the honourable gentleman.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I am not aware of any contract, or of the honourable member for invercargill being connected with one. The honourable gentleman could answer the question best himself.

APPROPRIATION BILL.

On the Order of the Day for the third reading of this Bill being called on,

Major ATKINSON said, — Does the honourable gentlemen propose to read the Appropriation Bill a third time before the very important resolutions with regard to annexation and federation, which are on the Order Paper, are disposed of?—because that would be quite unprecedented in parliamentary practice.

Sir J. VOGEL.—The Government think it wise that the Appropriation Bill should be read a third time without any prejudice to the important resolutions to which the honourable

gentleman has alluded, because that would be the most convenient course to both Chambers. The question of prorogation will depend on the time when the resolutions are disposed of.

Major ATKINSON.—That is entirely against parliamentary practice. If we assent to the Appropriation Bill we shall be absolutely in the hands of the Government, for they can pro-rogue us without another word being said. The Premier might make his speech on these resolutions, and prevent another word being said. I do not like the proceeding, for it would esta-

blish a bad precedent.

Mr. SHEPHARD.—I would remind the honourable member for Egmont that, in 1879, the Appropriation Bill was passed by this House before the Railways Construction Bill was read, which led to a considerable amount of difficulty afterwards. It was one of the most important measures of the late Government, and it was not dealt with finally until the Appropriation Bill had been sent to the other Chamber.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I move, That the Appropriation Bill be read a third time. I am very anxious, as I am sure all other honourable members are, to hear the honourable member for Egmont deliver the speech which he has promised to deliver on the occasion, with regard to such incidents of the past session as he may think it desirable to refer to.

Major ATKINSON.—I am very sorry, at the present moment, to have to say anything on this question, for I am not at all in the humour to talk; but, still, I cannot allow the Appropriation Bill to be read a third time without making a few remarks upon what has occurred during the session which is now drawing to a Sir, the honourable gentleman took office with a great flourishing of trumpets. With banners flying and drums beating the honourable gentleman took a seat on those benches, and he assured us and the country that he was going to do great works—not in the future, but in the present. They were to be done immediately; but the honourable gentle-man was ejected shortly after obtaining his seat, and no sooner did he get on this side of the House than he told us that, if he had only been allowed to remain for a month longer, the whole of the promises which he had made would have been in course of fulfilment. Mr. STOUT.—Hear, hear.

Major ATKINSON.—"Hear, hear," says the honourable gentleman. Well, it was a very unfortunate gap, that of ten days, which caused the honourable gentleman to forget all the great schemes he had in view, and apparently rendered him entirely incapable of giving effect to them at all during the current session. But, Sir, upon regaining possession of the Treasury benches, the Premier has declared that everything that was in that Queen's Speech he approved of, and the Government are going to give effect to.

Sir J. VOGEL.—Hear, hear.
Major ATKINSON.—The Treasurer says, "Hear, hear." So I am quite right in building any argument I may have on the Queen's | the land flowing with milk and honey. Now.

Sir J. Vogel

Speech. Now, what did he undertake to do? And what has he done? He undertook to push on the public works with much greater vigour than they had been carried on before.

Mr. HOLMES.—He has not the money. Major ATKINSON.—He has not asked for money. He undertook to push on the public works with very much greater vigour than before. He told us that departmental expenditure could be greatly contracted; that taxation was a great deal too much, and was to be reduced; and he had told us before—and we were led to believe it from the subsequent speeches of the honourable gentleman — that, with regard to education, we could obtain quite as good an article at a greatly reduced rate. He led the country to believe from one end to the other that the magic wand was to be waved, and that gold was to shower down upon the land; that prosperity was to be restored, and that our difficulties were to vanish as the morning mist. And a large number of the members of this House believed his statement; the country still believes in him to a certain The way in which the honourable gentleman has come forward, and the way in which he has been supported, especially by a certain section of Canterbury, reminds me of an incident in the history of the great people to whom the honourable gentleman himself belongs. It will be recollected that, when Moses left his children of Israel for a time, the people did not know what had become of him, and they demanded of Aaron that he should make them a golden calf. That is the position which the Canterbury members especially, or a large portion of them, have taken up. Mr. STOUT.—Who is Aaron?

Major ATKINSON.—The Colonial Treasurer is Aaron, and he, in obedience to those honourable gentlemen, made a calf. He made a molten calf, and has set it up to be worshipped, and those honourable gentlemen have bowed down and worshipped the calf that he has set up; and I venture to say that the House and the people of New Zealand will, before very long, ask, "What have the people of New Zealand done that this gentleman should compel them to do such a thing as once more to fall down and worship the golden calf not only of the children of Israel, but the golden calf of the present day—falling down and worshipping the golden calf which the honourable gentle-man has set up?" The Nemesis that followed the worship of the golden calf then, will follow this, and follow it very early; and especially my honourable friends from Canterbury will feel, to a great extent, the bitter disappointment, the bitter regret, of having gone out of the right way and worshipped the golden calf which the honourable gentleman set up. It is all very well for the honourable gentleman to tell us that these are the gods that have brought us out of the land of Egypt; but we know they are not, and we know the worship we are now rendering to this golden calf will never carry us on through the wilderness we are supposed to be in, and will never lead us to

I ask let us see what this honourable gentleman has done for us-how he has fulfilled his promises. Let me begin with the last. about education? Where is the reduction? The honourable gentleman brings down an increase, and tells us this is the natural increase, because there are more children coming under school age. We know the children increase every year. It is true the honourable gentleman did make a proposition that no increase should be given, and that 5s. should be cut off; but the very instant he found the feeling in this House he very wisely — and I give him every credit for it—retired from that position, and was content to increase the estimates instead of decreasing them. Where is the honourable gentleman's pledge in this matter? Why has he not - if he is as capable as he says he is, and as he has led the country to believe he is — why has he not given us as good an education system as before at a greatly-reduced rate? Where are the honourable gentleman's promises to this effect, and what chances are there that the honourable gentleman will fulfil his promises? Has he given us any reason at all for not having fulfilled them? I ask him to tell us the direction in which he is going to move in this matter. Is he going to give us as effective a system at a very greatly reduced cost? If the honourable gentleman cannot tell us that, he is there—to that extent, at any rate—on false pretences. Then, Sir, just follow on to this public works What do we find there? I showed the other night that all the honourable gentle-men asked, and all that they have got left, adding the two together, was, at the outside, £900,000 to spend upon land and construction of railways. My honourable friend the Minister for Public Works did not refer to that at all. He did not attempt to answer that point. But the country should know that the total amount, according to their own figures, for the current year and next year, cannot be more than £900,000. I do not believe myself that it can exceed £800,000, unless they starve other services, for which I do not know how they are to provide money except out of the balance of the loan. How is it possible to push on public works with the vigour they undertook to do. when they have only £450,000 a year to spend in this manner? I ask the honourable gentleman, how is he to fulfil his pledge in this mat-ter? How is it possible for him to do it? These are the two most important things the honourable gentleman undertook. Then, he also undertook generally to reduce the departmental expenditure. That, he says, can be "greatly contracted." I do not know what that means. I suppose it means reduced; but it may have some mystic meaning that I do not know. But, I say, has the honourable gentleman fulfilled this promise? Has he attempted to make reductions? No, Sir; there is increase upon increase, and, if honourable gentlemen will look at the total amount, after deducting the necessary increase, they will find that the estimates are increased, and not decreased. What is there more? There are two more Chairmen

Appropriation Bill.

of Committees, to whom £100 each has been given. Why, I do not know. The House some time ago considered that was not to be done. Why the honourable gentleman, when he says that the expenditure ought to be greatly de-creased, should take upon himself to recom-mend us to make a larger expenditure upon the members of this House I am at a loss to understand, and I think the country will not be satisfied with the proposals of the honourable gentleman in this respect. Then, what has been the course of the honourable gentleman all through the session? What was his course the other night, when he was replying to the criticisms which I made on the Public Works Statement? It was simply this: to immediately attack the late Government. Not one word did he say about the Statement. He did not attempt to defend one single point on which that Statement was attacked. He carried war into the enemy's camp by telling the House how wicked the late Government was, and I particularly. I do not care for that. I am not at all ashamed of anything I did. On the contrary, I am rather proud of it. I venture to think that, when the country has time to really see what the late Government did, the people will not only be thoroughly satisfied, but will feel proud that they had such a Government to rule over them so long. Let that be as it may, what the country wants is not that the honourable gentleman should tell them of the wickednesses of the late Government, but that he should explain his own doings, and what he is going to do to benefit the country. Now, I have no doubt that, directly the honourable gentleman replies to me this afternoon, we shall not hear anything at all about what he intends to do: that will not answer his purpose at all; but we shall hear a long account of the wickedness of the late Government. I wish he would turn his attention to explaining what he is going to do himself, for he has got a very great deal to explain; and, although it is quite true that the honourable gentleman appears to be floating with the tide at the present time, I warn him that he cannot live, like the bear, too long upon his own fat. If the winter is too long the bear gets very thin; and the honourable gentleman is now, I venture to say, presuming upon his past reputation. He is like the dormant bear, living on the credit of years past. And now I must say a few words with regard to these district railways, because the honourable gentleman is always leading the House to believe, and is constantly insinuating, that one of his reasons for taking these railways over was that the late Government advanced money to them improperly. I have answered that a good many times, and I shall answer it every time it crops up again. The honourable gentleman knows the truth of the assertion that the constant dripping of water wears away stones, and he thinks that if he can reiterate this statement a great many times he can get people to believe him. The only remedy I have is to keep the stone moving from under the drip, and I mean to do that by keeping on contradicting him every time he makes such a statement. I am going to tell the House the particulars of this.
Mr. HOLMES.—Indeed!

Major ATKINSON.—If my honourable friend the member for Christchurch South is not enjoying what I say, I should not mind at all if he would leave the chamber, because, if he will excuse me, I would say that his interjections are not altogether polite. I do not mind being interrupted, but our time is very short, and when I am interrupted I generally have a dig at the person interrupting me: but I would rather continue the thread of my discourse, and if the honourable gentleman does not appreciate what I say he should leave the chamber. No doubt he has a very hard skin, and disguises the pain he is suffering under that melodious laugh for which he is now so noted. The honourable gentleman will have an opportunity of addressing the House if he desires to do so; but if he interrupts me I shall have to reply to his interruptions, and I want to pursue my arguments. Now, with regard to the Waimea Plains Railway and the Duntroon Railway, it has always been represented by the honourable gentleman that the money was advanced from the Trust Funds. That has been put to the House several times, and some honourable members really believed that it was from the Trust Funds. It was no such thing.

Mr. STOUT.—From the Public Works Fund. Major ATKINSON.-Yes, it was simply from the Public Works Fund, and it should have been so stated; but it has been several times stated quite differently. The honourable gentleman did not mean it perhaps, but he stated so distinctly. Now, in 1879 the Government, seeing the difficulties that were likely to accrue upon these railways, thought it desirable that they should purchase the railways right out. The House was very indignant at the proposal, and would not agree to it. It was felt that, if something were not done, the works on these lines would have to be stopped. The House, taking these matters into consideration, authorized the Government to guarantee sixty thou-sand pounds' worth of debentures in aid of these railways. Now, £40,000 of that amount went to the Waimea Plains Railway. That amount was guaranteed, and it was done under the authority of this House. I do not for a moment deny the full responsibility of the Government, and, as a leading member of the late Government, I am willing to take my full responsi-bility in this matter. But, Sir, whatever that responsibility was, it was shared by a large majority of the House, which authorized the Government to make these advances, or, rather, to guarantee these debentures. The company applied for a guarantee of £56,000. The Government found itself in this position: It was bound in honour to carry out the decision of this House to guarantee these debentures. If it had not done so the line would have fallen into the hands of private persons, who would have derived an enormous advantage from that; and the debentures, which then stood at 6

or 7 per cent., would have been worth, with the guarantee, £112 or £120 for every £100 guaranteed. I have no hesitation in saying that I have always looked upon the Waimea Plains Railway as a part of the trunk lines of the colony, and I have always felt that sooner or later the Government would have to buy that railway. Therefore I considered whether it was right to permit these debentures to be sold, as they could immediately have been, with the guarantee of the Government, and thus put a large sum of money into some persons' pockets, and by which the matter would have been very much complicated when the time came for the Government to take the railway over. As Colonial Treasurer, I approved of the investment of money of the Insurance Department at par in these debentures; and I will say this: that, if the honourable gentleman does not make any bargain for the Waimes Plains Railway, those debentures are ample security for the money advanced, and are a most excellent investment for the Insurance Department. The honourable gentleman has since acknowledged that to be the fact; and if the department does its duty he will not get these debentures at anything like par—so good is the investment.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I agree with that.

Major ATKINSON.—The honourable member now agrees with me. He agrees that I am right in that matter, at all events.
Sir J. VOGEL.—I have told the House so a.

dozen times.

Major ATKINSON. - Well, the honourable gentleman stated exactly the opposite to this House at first. I am now calling the attention of the House to this matter: that the honourable member wants to purchase all these railways upon entirely false grounds. not purchased, at any rate, as security for the money borrowed, as the money is amply secured, and it can be recovered at any time. I felt very much disposed to do my utmost against the passing of the District Railways Leasing and Purchasing Bill, so as to put that question to the proof; but I was overborne in that by the consideration that there was a greater duty owing to the ratepayers and the colony generally than simply to defend my own character in this matter. But for this consideration I should have done my utmost to throw out the District Railways Bill. There is no question at all about the security: I am as certain of that as that I stand here. So much for that part of the question. Now I come to the £35,000 standing out. The question was, whether the Government should permit the company to be wound up and the railway to be purchased at a low rate, or allow a rate to be levied on the settlers. The railway would have fallen into the hands of third persons at a low price, and no benefit would have been conferred upon the colony. I say the Government had to consider whether it should advance that £35,000. I agreed to advance £35,600 upon railway debentures, and the effect of that was that the line fell into the hands of the Government, and is there still.

Major Atkinson

The Insurance Department has as security debentures worth £110,000 or £112,000, then the guarantee of the Government for £40,000, and then the uncalled capital, in addition to the value of the line. That was all placed by an instrument in the hands of the Public Trustee as security, and there could be no better security for the purpose of obtaining good interest, until the Government was in a position to deal with the railways. The Government could at any moment foreclose, and the rail-way may be sold for more than that amount. I felt bound to say this, in my own defence. Now I come to the Duntroon Railway. The House authorized a sum of £20,000 to be advanced. The Government had to consider whether they should exercise the authority which this House had given them, or guarantee the £20,000 upon what was most excellent security. The matter was carefully considered; and the Government, looking at the position of the railway, and not being disposed to invest in guaranteed debentures themselves, determined that they would not guarantee any debentures, but would pay for the completion of the line. They had full authority under the Public Revenues Act to take up debentures for £20,000, if the House and the That was Government were agreed to do so. done with the full knowledge of the House, and I will further say that, if the honour-able gentleman now chooses to foreclose, the £20,000 will cover the full interest without any deficiency whatever. There is no difficulty whatever about recovering the amount, and it could be recovered. The Crown Solicitor in Dunedin — Mr. Haggitt — a man of very high standing in the profession, approved of the deed. That is the position of these funds. I wish to put it to the House that no more was advanced than the House authorized the Government to advance.

Appropriation Bill.

Mr. HOLMES.—When?

Major ATKINSON. - In 1879, when I was Colonial Treasurer. The House was asked to give that authority, when it would not give us authority to purchase the line. It was done by Act—the last clause, I think, of "The Pub-lic Works Act, 1879." The sum of £60,000 was authorized to be advanced to these railways. So much for the statements made regarding the district railways. The security is good, and there is not the least occasion to go on with the purchase of these lines on these grounds. The honourable gentleman only weakened his case by proposing to purchase them on the pre-text of protecting public money invested, or by bringing this question of security forward as one reason to induce the House to purchase them. Had myself and other honourable members not been actuated by a sense of a higher duty, we should have gone against the proposal of the Government on this ground and on this ground only. Now, Sir, I will go back to the finance of the honourable gentleman in general. is a very important question indeed. The honourable gentleman undoubtedly led the country to believe that he could make both ends meet by some real relief to the country. up the time of the House too long, but I wish

We, who knew pretty well what was the state of the public accounts and the public finance, knew that the thing was absolutely impossible, unless—as I have pointed out on several occasions, and as every one knew who had followed the matter—the honourable gentleman was prepared to release the Sinking Fund. We pointed out that it was impossible for the honourable gentleman to do that during the current year, unless he borrowed money in aid of the Consolidated Fund. That was all pointed out to him by myself and by other honourable gentlemen at the beginning of the session. And that has come to pass. The honourable gentleman has taken our only nest-egg, and has thereby destroyed, I venture to say, the only possibility of hereafter arranging our finances on a satisfactory basis, and honour the destroyed to the satisfactory basis. as we had hoped to do when these loans fell in in the ordinary course. And why has it been done? There is no honourable gentleman who can answer; no honourable gentleman can say that it is for the good of the country that this has been done. No doubt it suited some honourable gentlemen; no doubt it was a very pleasant thing to hear of taxation being remitted. No doubt, when the settlers heard that, they said, "What a fine Colonial Treasurer we have got!" but they never heard that the remission has been made by actually borrowing to assist the Consolidated Fund. But that is the position we are in. We are simply borrowing to assist the Consolidated Fund in order that we may remit taxation, without having given the slightest consideration—not one thought—to the question whether the property-tax was the first tax that ought to go. Sir, I confess that this is a point upon which I feel the greatest anxiety. It seems to me that the action of the honourable gentleman in releasing this Sinking Fund before its time, by the aid of borrowing, has rendered it impossible that we can readjust our finance, as most of us looked forward to doing when this Sinking Fund became released by the ordinary operation of the inscription of stock. The honourable gentleman has already mortgaged the whole amount that he has released. He told us in his Public Works Statement that he will have £95,000 a year more. He trusts for that to an increase in the revenue from the railways. Sincerely I hope he may get it, but I venture to say that we are not wise to count our chickens before they are hatched in this way. We are not wise to lay ourselves out for borrowing a large amount annually, until we clearly see our way to providing the necessary interest. I venture to say that no one who reads the Public Works Statement can be satisfied with it. The honourable gentleman passes that million out of consideration—the third million - and takes no account of the £28,000; nor has he taken into consideration the additional interest he will have to pay on the money he is borrowing to recoup the Consolidated Fund. He knows this interest has got to be provided for, but he goes on just the same as if it had not. I do not want to take

to put the facts before the House, and to show my disapproval of the honourable gentleman's action in the very strongest language I can use. It seems to me to be the first really downward step that this colony has yet taken. It is a step we cannot be justified in taking; and what is it taken for? It is not taken to enable us to borrow money immediately for the purpose of constructing reproductive works. As I have shown, the money is not to be applied to that purpose; and there is no doubt that in a very short time we shall have to go on as we have been going on, and that our difficulties will be quite as great as they are this year and were the year before, and with no chance of that relief that we should have had if we had only been content to follow in the reasonable and steady finance of the late Go-The honourable gentleman told us vernment. of the difference between himself and the late Government, and especially referred to himself in congratulatory terms. He says, "The honourable gentleman is always looking into social questions. He wishes to create a pauper class. The patient is a little low, and he says, 'Bleed him more.' But," says the honourable gentleman, "I will see that no pauperism comes into the colony. I say prosperity shall come back to the colony. I, seeing the patient is a little low, shall give him a generous diet." Sir, the action of the honourable gentleman is like the action of the ostrich who thrusts his head into the sand and will not see the surround-I ventured to call the attention of the colony to some great social questions which are not seriously pressing upon us at present, but which must press upon us before long, if we do not take steps to anticipate danger. There do not take steps to anticipate danger. There is no harm in looking ahead. When in Australia I took some pains to inquire how the laws of distribution of property which have proved so troublesome in all English-speaking nations are working out there; and I found that in Sydney and Melbourne the same results were noticeable as are noticeable in older countries. I found a separation between two classes. I saw immense wealth on one hand and extreme poverty on the other. And, Sir, we should have experienced the same thing here to a greater extent than we have, for it is gradually creeping on us, were it not that our towns are small. We have no central capital; but, if we had a capital such as Sydney or Melbourne, then we should see more plainly that the laws which are operating there are operating here, and the pauper would be growing more fast than he is. The problem is awaiting us, and will demand solution. The honourable gentleman pays no heed to it. He tells us to shovel the money in, to be active, to go on colonizing, and never to trouble about the pauper class. My sole object is to draw the attention of the people to the laws which govern the social state in which we live, and to endeavour, if possible, before diffi-culty arises, to make provision against difficulties which we know must occur. But what says the honourable gentleman? "Let us do says the honourable gentleman? "Let us do nothing of the kind. Let us eat and drink, for road? I think not. Then, how are you going to-morrow we die." That is the policy of the

"Let us colonize, let honourable gentleman. us have plenty of public works, let us go on as we have been going on, and everything will be right." That is the difference between the honourable gentleman and myself. I venture to tell the people, and I shall continue to tell them, that there is no royal road to comfort, that there is no royal road to happiness in this world, except that of thrift and work. The honourable gentleman says, on the other hand, "A wave of my wand will do it. Trust me with your finances, and I will finance you out of difficulty." No man in this world ever financed himself out of difficulties, and no colony ever will - nothing of the kind will get us out of our difficulties; and I hope that this policy of the honourable gentleman is not going to lead us away from the great truth that work and thrift alone can make us prosperous, and to induce us to believe that public works will raise our population above want. House should recognize that our social laws are not satisfactory, and that our social state is not satisfactory; and that this great question has not only to be faced, but to be dealt with. To say that a vigorous public works policy is going to get us over these difficulties is to tell us what we shall find out, to our great grief and sorrow, and something worse, I am afraid, is not at all in accordance with fact. We have got to look this question in the face, and we must not think that falling down and worshipping the golden calf will carry us into a land flowing with milk and honey. How is it possible that our finances can be put upon a satisfactory basis? How can we do it? The Government have seized the only fund that would have given us time to turn round and consider our position. Then, I ask, why have the Government not stated their views upon this great local-government question? What is their view. I suppose it goes somewhat on the lines laid down by the honourable member for Napier. But the honourable member for Napier, like many other gentlemen, has never condescended to give us particulars. He says, "Let us have united districts, whose interests are in common, and let us have them as large as possible, and let us give them large revenues." And what is to be their revenue? The power of taxation! And the taxation is to be on the basis of a land-tax! And yet it is not to be on the basis of a land-tax, for the whole idea, the whole principle, of a land-tax is given up, because the honourable gentleman proposes to allow ample exemptions - a fair margin. It is not to be a pure land-tax. It is to be something else — a tax upon blocks of land above a certain size, not on the small holdings, so that everybody who is a small holder is to escape paying a fair quota of the general expenses of a district. But I would ask the House to consider for a moment the meaning of this. Take the district between here and Napier. How are you going to get the main road between these two points main-

Major Atkinson

ing from one important centre to another? I shall be told that the districts will be made sufficiently large to do it; but will any honourable gentleman tell me for a moment that the country will submit to that? I ask the House to consider what people in thin, straggling districts will do. I ask the honourable member for Wanganui, does he think that Patea will consent to be governed by Wanganui, or does he think that the people of Rangitikei will consent to be governed by Wanganui, or would Wanga-nui consent to be governed by Wellington, or the Wairarapa by the Hutt? No; the thing is impossible. I ask honourable gentlemen to compare their personal knowledge with the propositions that have been suggested, and they will see that the thing is impossible. Then, we hear of the charge of maintaining the police being put upon the districts, with some other charges, to the extent, in the whole, of some hundred thousand pounds. But where is the money to come from? Then, we know very well that the whole tendency is towards splitting up counties, instead of extending them. Many very large counties were consti-tuted under the Counties Act, but owing to local jealousies they were divided. So great is the jealousy that exists between localities that the whole tendency still is not to an increase in the size of counties, but to a diminution. There is a general feeling that, where a small knot of persons get together, they are bound to manipulate rates and revenue to the advantage of their own portion of the district. I do not say whether the statement is true, but certainly it is the universal belief; and yet the one panacea the honourable gentleman has for all our evils is based upon a system which ignores the existence of that feeling. Everything hinges on that. Well, now, I say that the honourable gentleman should have sketched out how they will get over these difficulties. When they took away the Sinking Fund they should have given us some scheme which would enable us to say that the finance of the country was satisfactory. I venture to say that the difficulties into which the honourable gentleman will lead us will not easily be got rid of; and, if honourable members go back to their constituents with the feeling that great sums are to be spent, they will be greatly disappointed at the rate at which works are going to The evil the honourable gentleman has done is that he has raised great expectations throughout the colony, and tried to make people believe they can get out of difficulty without hard work and thrift. It can never It can never be done. I ask the honourable gentleman, in reply, to point out why he has not given us any relief on this education expenditure, which was such an easy matter. Why has he not greatly reduced the departmental expenditure, which he was going to do? Why has he increased the expenditure of this House? I shall be told that all this cannot be done in a hurry. "Hear, hear," an honourable member says. Then why did the honourable gentleman say that be could do it? Here it is in the Governor's Speech. Why did he tell the electors of

Christchurch that all this was to be done? Why did he say, "Only give me the power, and it will be done"? Of course the honourable gentleman has had to turn his attention to other matters. Then, I ask the honourable gentleman to tell us his reasons for this: I ask him to tell us why, if he is going to push on public works, he has not made provision to do Of course the reason is this; it is evident enough: The honourable gentleman talked without a full sense of responsibility; at any rate, if not without a sense of responsibility, he talked without a full knowledge of the affairs of the country. He has now found that what the Hall Government undertook in 1879, and more particularly in 1882, was actually given effect to-that is, that the money should be so tied up, that the work should be so fixed by Parliament, that it would be impossible for any Government, new or old, to deal with the money as we had been used to deal with it The honourable gentleman had not then recognized that fact; but he has recognized it now, and he has also recognized the tone of this House—that the House is not prepared to enter into an extravagant scheme of expenditure; and, of course, the expectations that have been raised must cause very great discontent throughout the country as soon as the people recognize the facts I have described. I will simply say, in conclusion, that the dif-ference between the honourable gentleman and myself is really a difference of principle. have pushed on, as a member of the Government, the colonization and the public works of the colony vigorously and continuously without break. All the statements with regard to the Government dozing, those diagrams in the Public Works Statement show to be untrue. honourable gentlemen look they will see that great progress with public works has been made ever since the House and the country determined they should be carried on. But those honourable gentlemen now come in with a flourish, and tell us that the work must be expedited: at the same time they provide no means to do it. No doubt more railways can be opened this year than were opened before, because the Government have been gradually bringing certain lines to a head; but it will not be owing to the vigour of those honourable gentlemen: it will be owing to the natural falling-in of the contracts. I ask honourable gentlemen not to take my word or the Colonial Treasurer's word for it. I ask them to turn to the Statement, and there find the facts as to what has actually been done. They will find in those diagrams steady and persistent progress throughout. We have not, as the honourable gentleman would lead the House to believe, gone to work spasmodically. We have looked as far ahead as, and farther than, the honour-able gentleman. We said that for three years we could safely spend £1,000,000 a year in public works; but we took upon ourselves—and the House approved of it last year—to depart slightly from that course, owing to the great depression throughout the country consequent upon the low prices of our produce. We took

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upon ourselves to exceed that rate of expenditure by £300,000 or £400,000. Hence the only "anticipation," as it is called, and that not properly, because the only anticipation of the third million was in order to help the country over that difficulty; and the House has approved of what we have done. I think the real difference between the honourable gentleman and myself is simply this: that the honourable gentleman professes to do a great deal more than he intends to do; that he blows his trumpet very hard when he says, "We must have continuous works, continuous colonization"-as though that had not been the scheme of the late Government and the House. Sir, almost every word, certainly every idea, with regard to steady progress, with regard to the introduction of population, and with regard to the money to be borrowed, that is in this Public Works Statement can be found in the Public Works Statement of my honourable friend Mr. Johnston, and the Financial Statement of myself, to this House. There is no difference whatever; and the only difference, as I have said, is that the honourable gentleman would make us believe that he is going to do great things. He would tell us that there is no such thing as poverty—that we must not believe in it; and he will make no provision for it except by a poor-rate: the honourable gentleman regretted that he had not put on a poorrate, and if that is not a recognition of it in its very worst form I do not know what is. the honourable gentleman tells us we need have no fear about that if we only adopt his plan of spending large sums of money. I venture to think that the country will yet wake up and find out the whole of the sham of the honourable gentleman's proposals, and will find out also that wherein they differ from ours in any respect they differ for the worse.

Sir J. VOGEL.—The honourable member has made a rather singular speech, since he has so mixed up a defence of himself with an attack upon the present Government that it is hard to draw the line between the two. I shall endeavour to follow him as much as possible in regard to those points on which he has attacked us, and in regard to those points on which he has defended his own Government. I shall, if I may be allowed to say so, try to let him off as lightly as possible. It almost seems ungenerous to press hardly upon the honour-able gentleman, if he really feels any consolation at this, the eleventh hour of the session, in defending himself, after having failed to do so during all the previous session. If it is any satisfaction to him, in a thin House, when all the members have disappeared, to take this consolation, it is hard perhaps that I should begrudge it to him. However, it appears necessary that I should say a little on the various points. I shall touch lightly upon them, and then go into the question of what is really the history of the session. First of all, I refer to a statement of the honourable gentleman. He says that we have increased the public works salaries and the officers in that department. My colleague

explained that that was simply taking the House into his confidence: that he did not pay salaries out of votes for railways authorized by the House, but he allowed the House to know what officers were in the employment of the department. He pointed out that, under the guise of a so-called reduction made some two or three years ago by the Government, they had taken officers off the estimates - off the permanent staff-and kept them on by employing them as supernumeraries charged upon the various railways. I think the honourable member had better have left that question alone.

Major ATKINSON .- I do not think so at all,

because that is not so.
Sir J. VOGEL.—That statement was made in the House. Why did not the honourable gentleman contradict it when speaking? I dare say my colleague, if necessary, could give the Then, as regards the names of the officers. payment of two Chairmen of Select Committees, it is a very paltry subject to bring down at this time of the session; but the two Select Committees strongly recommended that their Chairmen should be paid. The Government, in obedience to that wish, gave the House an opportunity of voting the sum in the one case; and, in the other, the recommendation not having come down before the estimates were finished, the Government took upon itself the responsibility of meeting the wishes of the House expressed by resolution. I should think the honourable gentleman must be very harddriven to find fault with the Government when he has to mention an instance of that kind. Now, the honourable gentleman has really misrepresented us in what he said about prosecuting public works with vigour. I have looked into the Speech presented at the opening of Parliament, for which he rightly holds us responsible, and I think we explained in it very plainly and clearly what we proposed to do with public works. I shall come to that di-rectly and separately. The honourable gentleman contrived to mix up what I had said previously and what had been said in the Speech from the Throne, and implied that I was inconsistent, because the Government had not literally carried out the promises which I had made, or which the honourable gentleman charges me with making, on occasions when I had addressed public meetings. He did not expressly refer to the occasions. Let me at once say this: that, as regards the question of the reduction of the cost of education, I have not been able to effect what I expressed in several addresses which I had made to the country, and what I thought I should be able to effect. But it is not possible for me to fly in the face of the country, and it appears to me that the country is so enamoured of the present system of education that it is impatient of any interference with it. I am still of opinion that the education system is more costly than we can well afford, and that we might get an equally good article at a less cost to the consolidated revenue. I have never said that we pay the teachers too highly, or that it was imprudent to teach children; but I

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have said that the cost was too much cast upon | the consolidated revenue, and not sufficiently localized; and I also think that, when children almost in arms are charged to the State, the course taken is a mistaken one. I do not think that there is an honourable gentleman in this House who would be cruel enough to send a child of his own to school for the purpose of being educated at five years of age. And yet we pay £4 each for children of five years of age, and, when we ask why this is done, we are told, "Oh, if we do not admit children of five years of age, the local Committees will not have enough to spend upon education." I would much sooner give £6 each for all those children who ought to be educated than make up the amount by pretending to educate children who ought rather to be in their mothers' arms than in school. That is my opinion, and I do not hesitate to express it; but I believe it is not shared by my colleagues altogether. My honourable friend the Premier has very liberal views in regard to the ques-tion of education. We have not been able to lessen the expenditure during the present session, and as to what we may do next session with regard to this subject I am not in a position to promise. Now, Sir, in regard to the question of the district railways, it seems very odd that the honourable gentleman should have come down at this period of the session to defend himself; but, as far as he has made an explanation, I will follow him. He says that the House authorized him to guarantee £60,000. I suppose the House did not do that spontaneously, but that it was done at the instance of the honourable gentleman and his Government. And then he tells us that he guaranteed £40,000, which was worth a considerable premium with a Government gua-rantee of 6 per cent., and sold it to the Insur-ance Department. I acknowledge it was more prudent to do that than to give it to private individuals; but it appears to me that, if the Government is going to guarantee debontures, it would be better to say, "We will guarantee 4-per-cent. debentures, and you can obtain par for them." What is the object of guaranteeing 6-per-cent. debentures? Look at the ridiculous position in which he placed himself this afternoon! He told us, with regard to the Waimea Plains Railway, that he had always considered that the Government must purchase that line as part of the main trunk line. We know very well that it must be so; and the company, to put pressure on the Government to buy the line, are running trains at such times as will be most inconvenient to the main trunk line, so that persons wishing to go from Dunedin to the Lakes cannot go right through in one day. Then, what does he tell us with regard to this line? That he guaranteed £40,000 at 6 per cent., and bought £35,000 at 61 per cent. Now, the interest on £40,000 at 6 per cent. and £35,000 at 61 per cent. amounts to £4,587 a year. That represents the £75,000 which the Government holds in debentures; but if the

Government had bought the whole line they

would have got it at a less rate of interest

than these debentures represent. The Government books show that the whole line cost £108,000, for which the Government could have issued 4-per-cent. debentures. In other words, the Government would have had to pay for this £108,000 interest at the rate of 4 per cent., amounting to £4,320 a year, and the whole line would have become their property; instead of which the Government has to guarantee £40,000 and buy £35,000, at an annual cost of £4,587, part of which the Treasury has to pay to the Insurance Fund, the guarantee not being complete, and the other part making no return, as the company is in de-fault. Can there be any doubt as to which would be the more prudent manner of dealing with the question? The honourable gentleman may have very good aspirations and intentions, but he evidently has not sufficient resource in himself, or sufficient common-sense, to carry them out. He knew that he ought to have bought this railway, but he did not know how to do it. Put a child down to any task and tell him to do it; he will try, and, if he has not intelligence, what will he do? He will not intelligence, what will he do? He will leave it undone. I am sorry to have to make these remarks, but, holding the opinions which the honourable gentleman does with regard to this railway, he should not have said what he did just now. Then, with regard to the dealing with the Sinking Fund being an immoral proceeding, the honourable gentleman has referred to the matter so very often this session that I am bound to refer to it very often too. I have to tell him once more that he is absolutely wrong in saying that we are going to seize the Sinking Fund. We have distinctly stated in our proposals that, instead of taking any part of the Sinking Fund in proportion to the amount converted, we touch none of it until the whole loan is converted without leaving in the hands of the Commissioners sufficient to meet the full amount of the outstanding liabilities.

Major ATKINSON.—I referred to the contribution, not to the Sinking Fund. It is the contribution you pay into the Consolidated Fund, not the Sinking Fund.

Sir J. VOGEL.—Then, the honourable gentleman allows that part of his argument to fall

to the ground.

Major ATKINSON.—I did not mention it. Sir J. VOGEL.—Well, as to our borrowing to pay this Sinking Fund, the honourable gentleman can put it in that way if he likes; but the transaction is really this: The Sinking Fund increases by an annual amount, and we agree to convert or create an exactly equivalent amount of stock or debentures to cover the amount of the annual increase. The increase in the Sinking Fund is set free the increase since March last will pay off the amounts created. There is no disguise at all in the matter. We carry out our engagements entirely, and we pay to the Crown Agents and the bondholders the exact amount we are entitled to pay. The honourable gentleman then accuses me of following

in his footsteps as regards borrowing; and then, in a melancholy manner—distinctive, if I may say so, of an honourable gentleman in not remote contiguity to him—he charges upon us all sorts of dangers that are to come upon the country through our borrowing policy, which, in the first place, he characterizes as an imitation of his own. The honourable gentleman is in a dilemma and he cannot get out of it. I know that it is said that lawyers give forty reasons why a thing should not be, and, if one of them is good, the other thirty-nine may be rubbish. I can only suppose that the honourable gentleman is acting on that principle, when he first says, "I accuse you of following me;" and then he says, "I object to you following me, and tell you that you are acting in a most immoral manner, one that is likely to bring upon the country great disasters." Now, as regards our proposals with respect to local government, the honourable gentleman is very doubtful as to what the result of our efforts will be. I am bound to say that the honourable gentleman is much stronger in his anticipations of what we shall not do during the recess than he is in his criticism of what we have done during the session. He says that it is impossible for us to bring down an improved system of local government—that it is full of evil and cannot be improved. He tells us that Waitotara will not consent to be governed from Wanganui, nor from the top of Mount Egmont, and that the Hutt will not allow itself to be governed from Hawera, and so on. I admit that it will be a difficult problem to solve; but it will be time enough to criticise our proposals when they are brought down. Of course he is quite right in drawing the picture from his own visual range; but I must ask him to reflect that the whole system of the country does not depend upon what suits Hawera, or the top of Mount Egmont, or Waitotara. We are not now an essentially West Coast Government. Then, he asks why we have not reduced the departmental expenditure. I am trying to follow his remarks, but he referred to this matter three different times. The answer is, For the very same reason that he told his constituents at Hawera. He said, in effect: Owing to the dissolution you will gain no good whatever from my efforts to reduce departmental expenditure during this year: it will be too late for any good to come of it. For the rest, I have only to say that we have not been able to do anything in that direction because he would not help us, for he destroyed the Bill which had been created after months of labour on the part of various Civil servants. Sir, I cannot, in a history of the session, in conscience, however painful it is to me, help reminding the honourable gentleman of this Here was a question in which departmatter. mental officers were engaged day after day, week after week, and month after month, the outcome of which was a Bill prepared for the Government, and we were denied any chance of seeing it because it was claimed that it was private property! Then he calls upon plan is to lie down under the difficulties, Sir J. Vogel

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me to explain the increase in the expenditure in connection with this House; though that is not much, for the whole charge does not amount to more than £300 or £400. It is therefore not very serious; but, however small the sum may be, the Government should be very chary of interfering with the officers of the House, or of abusing its power by bringing down votes as a means of coercing or obliging the officers of the House.

Major ATKINSON.—I did not refer to the officers of the House, but to the members of the House. That I stated most distinctly. Sir J. VOGEL.—Then the honourable mem-

ber referred only to the two Chairmen of Committees? He did not refer to the increases recom-mended by the Speaker. We plead guilty; we are a bad Government, and you ought to turn us out. Two Committees of the House recommended that their Chairmen should have £100 each, and, because we did not use the power at our command to frustrate the wishes of the House, it was very wrong of us indeed—very wrong. Now, the honourable gentleman misrepresented me entirely when he said I stated that the only remedy for dealing with charitable institutions was a poor-rate. I never said anything of the kind. I said I should be glad that there should be thrown upon local bodies the charge of these institutions. And here I may say that honourable members do not appear to understand the difficulty of dealing with these charitable institutions. Some-body suggested the other day that we should knock off £20,000. Some of these institutions have been cast directly upon the charge of the Government, without intermediate bodies in the shape of Committees. Where there are Committees in charge, the Government may say, "You must collect so much." Where the Government have charge themselves, what are they to do? I have telegrams almost every day saying, "I have supplied so much milk to such a hospital: when shall I get my money?" If the Government withdrew, patients would be left without food, without care, and the institutions without expenditure. What we wish is to get local bodies to take charge of these institutions, and then to deal with these local bodies; but at present these institutions are cast upon our Wellington Hospital comes to us for a loaf of bread, Christchurch Hospital for a pound of butter, Dunedin Hospital for an extraattendant. There is nothing between us. We want some medium. The honourable gentleman accuses me of casting about a magic wand to insure the prosperity of the colony. The wand to which the honourable gentleman refers is simply the wand of common-sense, the wand of using natural causes which would produce natural effects, which have been prevented from being realized because of the panicstricken condition of a Government without resources and without intelligence to meet difficulties. Every one who heard the honourable gentleman speak to-day could see what a he has no idea how to combat them. His

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instead of meeting them. The honourable gentleman talked of the golden calf, which he wished me to be compared to. The somewhat sacrilegious comparison he applied also in an indirect manner to my constituency of Canterbury, for having taken me into their favour. He said, "You shall suffer the same as the Children of Israel suffered, because they worshipped the golden calf." I think that was going a little way beyond what was quite proper in the House. He might have given us the curse of Kehama, for instance, without the sacrilegious and blasphemous idea that he was privileged on behalf of the All-Powerful to call down on his opponents the doom of old. For the rest, I think the people of Canterbury had much better worship a golden calf than a brazen one. But I shall not push the com-parison further. I have only one other remark to make - about railways. It was painfully evident, on reading the speeches which the honourable gentleman made during the recess, that he has no idea of the object of railways. He thinks that the benefit of railways to a district is during the period of construction, not in the use of the railways when constructed. Thus, the consequence was that he spread his butter very thin. He said, "You shall have a little bit of a railway here and there." He was quite honest in the matter. He said, "I do not think railways anything, but I will give you a little expenditure here, there, and everywhere." But the present Government consider that whatever railways they are charged with the responsibility of constructing they should carry, as quickly as possible, to a point from which they can get returns of revenue. I was speaking to a departmental officer of long standing some time ago. I said to him, in standing some time ago. I said to him, in reference to the Auckland-Wellington Railway, "When do you expect to get that through?" "Oh, in eight years, I dare say." "What do you mean? Are you joking?" I said. "Well, we are not allowed to do work quickly now. It is very much against our wishes, but we are not allowed to do work quickly; the benefit of construction is to be spread over a long time." My honourable colleague proposes to open communication between Auckland and Wellington in three years. That is the difference. I should like to say a few words with regard to the session from a purely disinterested point of view, unmindful of any of those petty questions which the honourable gentleman has raised this afternoon. Let us see what the history of the session is. After testing the feeling of the country in a variety of ways, the honourable member for Egmont came to the conclusion that he did not sufficiently possess its confidence, and that it was necessary for him to resign. There were some changes consequent upon the difficulty of determining exactly what should be the position of the Government, and finally we came into office about the first week of Sep-We stated that we accepted the Governor's Speech as the basis of our policy. Now, Sir, I will just go over that Speech. The honourable gentleman at one moment seemed

to me to be inclined to do so. Then I thought to myself, "I have him: I shall not have to speak: he has only to read our own Speech, and that is a complete answer to all he says.' We said in that Speech it was inadvisable to deal with questions of abstract policy; and we have avoided doing so as far as possible. The abolition of entail and the alteration of the franchise have not been carried. At the same time, in dealing with the history of the session, I must say it is a matter of regret to me, as I do believe it is to honourable members, that one measure, although it may have been one of abstract policy, has not gone through. There is no one who has heard or read the speech of the honourable member for Rangitikei but must have been struck with the logic, common-sense, and pathos with which he brought the question before the House; and I wish it had fallen to his lot to give effect to the measure which he proposed. But, Sir, even that has not passed. Now, as regards the next point we said we should deal with—local industries. The House has had sufficient evidence of the Government considering that one of the most important questions with which it has to deal. To some extent we have dealt with it, because we have passed the Beet-root Sugar Bill, a measure which is calculated to give a very large amount of industry to the colony. 'Now, Sir, I know that I see smiling faces on honourable gentlemen who fail to un-derstand that Bill. But I wish to say this: that, if the sugar industry were established, no one would come down and propose an Excise duty upon sugar. The Bill is a mere declaration that there should not be that which there would not be without it. A bonus is offered in addition, according to the system that has been adopted for a great many years in the colony. As regards public works, I will read what we said, and honourable gentlemen will see how incorrectly the honourable gentleman stated that we proposed to go far in advance of the works which he had left to us as a legacy. We knew enough at the time, though young in office, to feel that the obligations cast upon us by the previous Government were of a very serious nature. This is what we said:—

"The progress of public works also demands resolute attention. It will be necessary to consider carefully the position of those now in progress, with a view to determining how they shall be proceeded with. It cannot prove economical to construct works in a manner soslow and fragmentary as to postpone indefinitely any return from the money expended. On the other hand, the colony must be careful to restrain the exercise of its borrowing powers. within reasonable limits.

"My Ministers consider that a great deal of the pressure which is brought to bear on a Government to construct works in unprofitable fragments arises through the fear that, if worksare delayed, parliamentary authority for them may be withdrawn, and are therefore of opinion that it would be expedient to determine that the public faith is pledged, unless under very exceptional circumstances, to the works which Parliament once sanctions. If this assurance be well understood, the various districts concerned will be contented to see works carried on in a manner compatible with early

returns from the expenditure.

"My Ministers consider that great care should be exercised with regard to extending existing engagements. Some works already commenced require to be carried on vigorously—such, for example, as the Otago Central Railway. The small length of line required to connect Napier with Palmerston North should also receive early attention.

"The authority to continue the Nelson line to Roundell should be extended to connecting Nelson with the line between the east and west coasts of the Middle Island. The trunk system of the Island would then be nearly completed.

"The line to connect the east and west coasts of the Middle Island, to which I have just referred, is of great importance. My Advisers will propose to you to endeavour, in the first instance, to procure its construction by aiding private enterprise. There is every reason for believing that the west coast of the Middle Island possesses mineral resources of enormous value: indeed, as regards coal and gold, the existence of such resources under highly-remunerative conditions has been proved. The proposed railway will greatly benefit the district; but, for the proper development of the capabilities of the West Coast, other measures will be required whilst the railway works are in progress. I commend the whole subject to your earnest consideration.

"The completion of through railway communication between Auckland and Wellington is a colonial work of vast importance, which must be hastened to a conclusion with the utmost possible expedition. It will be proposed to you to appoint a Select Committee to report which route it would be most expedient to adopt. Authority will be asked to enable the State to acquire extensive blocks of land

along the line of this railway."

Could anything more literal be imagined than what we have done during the present session in respect to our promises put forth in the Speech in regard to public works? We have pursued the idea of carrying all these fragments of railways to the nearest point that will give us returns. A Committee having reported on the matter, we have determined the route of the North Island Trunk Railway, and we shall proceed with it with vigour. have given authority for private enterprise to construct the East and West Coast Railway, and nothing is more indicative of the renewed confidence of the country and of the House than the fact that honourable members, content with what we said in the Speech, allowed the schedule of the Loan Bill to pass without the amounts being hypothecated to each separate railway—a thing they would not have dreamt of doing under the late Government. The late Government had to put down in the Three-Million Loan Act every village they intended to serve. Why? Because the country felt no confidence in what the Government

contemplated, and did not believe that the Government had sufficient resource to carry on in a continuous fashion the colonization policy. With regard to the Native lands question, we stated that we would not press the settlement of the question this session, but would endeavour to deal with it so as to secure the interests of the country—to settle it in a manner that would be satisfactory to the Natives. We will set ourselves, during the recess, to the consideration of the subject, and to entering into such conferences with the Natives as will enable us to bring down a measure which will be likely to have their support when it becomes law. Now, as regards the land-tax, we stated, early in the session, that we should not press for a land-tax. There was a clear majority of members in the House who believed that the colony required a large amount of extra taxation, and that, if the property-tax were done away with and a landtax substituted for it, it would be so large as to mean confiscation. We were not in a position, until we examined the question, to say that we should reduce taxation. I remember, before the final Ministry was formed, I was talking to a member of the House, who is now absent—an influential member of the House-and I told him I was convinced in my own mind that we should be able to reduce very largely, if not do away altogether with, the property-tax. He had before told me that it was absolutely necessary to increase taxation. When I gave utterance to that opinion he looked at me and looked at the door. He evidently thought I was going out of my mind, and he wanted to be sure, in case I should become violent, that there was a safe channel for retreat. Well, we have not increased taxation, but we have reduced the property-tax by one-half. We have done that which honourable members opposite said they intended to do, but have not been able to do. I recollect a news-paper entirely devoted to Major Atkinson, and which never said an unkind word of him, writing, after the delivery of the Financial Statement, to this effect about the relief from the Sinking Fund: Of course Major Atkinson will not object to that: that was what he wanted to do in regard to the Sinking Fund: that policy he won't object to: they borrowed that policy from the late Premier. the substance of what was stated. Then, with regard to the district railways, we proposed a scheme for obtaining them cheaply upon conditions that would make it very profitable for the colony to acquire them. We did what the honourable gentleman tried for several years to do and was not able to do. What we proposed would have reduced the rates and liabilities of the ratepayers. Our scheme for carrying on those railways is not inconsistent with our giving land for the construction of fresh railways under the Railways Construction Act. The district railways are in a thoroughly disorganized state; they are in a disorganized condition, and they stand in the Considering the way of other enterprises. state of the money-market, and the large

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amounts the late Government placed upon that market, I think it may be said that it is not bad policy for us to give land for the purpose of encouraging the construction of these railways. With respect to the East and West Coast Railway, whether the work is under-taken by private individuals or by the Government there will be a large amount to be paid for interest during construction. There will probably have to be paid for interest during the course of the construction of the work a sum of from £250,000 to £300,000: it will suit us much better not to have to pay that, to be a charge upon our revenue. It will pay us better to sacrifice a large amount of land which is utterly useless to us without a railway. hope the railway will be carried out, but I am not quite sanguine that such will be the case now. Another charge that has been very freely made against me during the session is that I have indulged in personalities. I am not aware that I have done so, except in one case, or one case and a half. I was perfectly justified as regards the honourable member for Geraldine. He gave me ample provocation on several occasions, and I could not possibly overlook it, although I endeavoured to do so. With regard to the honourable member for Selwyn, I hope no ill feeling rests in the honourable member's mind on account of anything that has happened. I do not know, I am sure, whether he began it or I began it. The honourable member for Waitotara accused me of constantly "nagging." It was necessary for me constantly to refer to the history of the past, and if, in referring to that history, I was not able to do so in terms that were agreeable to the honourable gentleman, I could not help it. When he comes back to these benches he will be making the same reflections upon his predecessors. I do not think I indulged in any remarks that the honourable gentleman could consider personal or illnatured. I must say that I share the feeling of the House that, whether or not we agree altogether with the honourable member, we cannot fail to admire the honest and straightforward manner in which he discharges his public duties. A complaint made by the honourable gentleman's late colleague was that the work of the session has so favour-ably impressed the country. Well, surely that is our merit, and not our demerit. There is no doubt that the measures we have brought in—the West Coast Settlement Bill, the Railway Bills, the mail service, the North Island Trunk Railway, the Beet-root Sugar Bill, the steam service with the South Sea Islands that these measures are calculated to stimulate the industry and enterprise of the colonists; and that they have been favourably accepted throughout the colony is rather a matter for congratulation than for blame. Of course it must be inconvenient to the honourable gentleman to find others stepping into his shoes and doing this work. That is what we are proud of, and we surely ought not to be blamed for it. I have only to say this: that, when we are doing all this work—if he is

right in stating that we are only following in the honourable gentleman's footsteps, and not exceeding what he himself would have done. then he must allow that we are undeserving of censure. The very name of this Government has given confidence to the colony. The first day I took office I received a telegram from a distant part of the colony to this effect: "Large sale effected; largest sale effected for some months. Confidence restored." I am obliged to hurry on my remarks, as I do not desire to detain the House beyond the usual. hour for adjournment. Now, with regard to the recess: There are three great subjects to which we have to devote ourselves during the recess—one dealing with the question of local government, another dealing with local industries, and the third dealing with Native lands and with questions relating to the encouraging of settlement along the lines of railway—not settlement in large estates, but the settlement of the people in small areas, and the constituting in this colony of a happy yeomanry—"its country's pride." These are the great questions we have to deal with during the recess; and it will be time enough for the honourable member to complain of the manner in which they are dealt with when we come down next session and state what we have done. Arduous as has been our work during the session, our work is certainly not at an end; we have equally arduous work before us. At this last hour of the session, when we are about to part, it would be more in keeping with what honourable members owe to the colony if they were to say, "Let us do what we can to encourage the Government in its exertions to benefit the colony; let us not indulge in captious criticism; let us not try to throw odium upon their work in the past, or try to reduce their energies and exertions for good in the future." I shall not say more in reply to the speech of the honourable member. I trust I have said sufficient to show that this session has not been barren of results, and that we are not unmindful of the duty that still lies before us.

Bill read a third time.

ANNEXATION AND FEDERATION.

Mr. STOUT.—In moving these resolutions in regard to federation with the Australasian Colonies, I regret very much that I have to bring them forward at this time of the session; but, as honourable members are aware, the session has been of such a nature that it was almost impossible, if we were to get our Bills passed, that this discussion should have been begun sooner. Seeing, also, that we have not, perhaps, a long time to consider these resolutions, I shall have to make my remarks as brief as possible. The resolutions may be divided into two heads. There are, first, the resolutions which deal generally with what was done at the Convention; and, secondly, the resolutions dealing with the establishment of a Federal Council. As far as I am able to learn, and judging by the amendments of which notice has been given, there does not seem to be objection to any of the resolutions that deal generally with the duty of the Australasian Colonies towards the Pacific Islands and towards the Mother-country. The only difference of opinion is in regard to the Federal Council. I have, however, one or two words to say about these general resolutions. They deal, first, with the question of foreign Powers acquiring dominion in the Pacific, and I apprehend that the House will at once agree with the first resolution; the second follows, necessarily, from the first; and the third deals with the question of New Guinea. It will be noticed that the second resolution, which I ask the House to agree to, as carrying out the general resolutions, commits us to pay a share, according to our population, of the sum of £15,000 asked for by the Imperial Government. Honourable gentlemen who have followed the correspondence which has been laid upon the table are already aware that Lord Derby said to the colonies that, if they desired a protectorate over New Guinea, they must be prepared to pay the expense of a High Commissioner, and also to aid in providing him with a steamer, or some other accommodation, for getting about the islands. He proposed that they should contribute £15,000; and I think all the colonies have consented to pay their share of the £15,000-I mean all the colonies to whom the question has been put—Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, Fiji, and Queensland. In fact, most of the colonies have passed special Acts providing for the payment of their proportion of the amount. Since the question came up at the Convention, as honourable members are aware, the Home Government have proclaimed a protectorate, not over New Guinea, but over a part of itthe southern portion of it; and, after that was done, a telegram was sent to the colonies by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, stating that General Scratchley had been appointed Special Commissioner to control the British Protectorate in New Guinea, and that he would sail about the 20th November. He goes on to

"Please inquire, and state by telegraph, whether your Government, and other contributing Governments, agree to be represented in the Council. It is intended that Special Commissioner, who will be independent of High Commissioner, shall have jurisdiction over all persons within British Protectorate; and that no land shall be acquired there, except through him. He also will be Deputy-Commissioner for portions of New Guinea outside British Protectorate. Admiralty recommend purchase in England, steamer for Special Commissioner; estimated cost, arrive in Sydney, £16,000 or £18,000. To make him efficient, £15,000 guaranteed must be considerably increased."

It will also be noticed that several of the colonies which agreed to pay their proportion of £15,000 have refused to give the second contribution asked; and, so far as the Government of New Zealand is concerned, we do not see our way to advise this Parliament to give any further aid than the proportion of £15,000 according to

population, because we feel that, so far as New Guinea is concerned, New Zealand has practically little interest in its Protectorate. We hope, however, that if a Protectorate is established for New Guinea that will only be the beginning of a further Protectorate that will include many Pacific Islands not now under any settled Government, and our object in asking the House to agree to this resolution to pay a proportion of £15,000 is to see, if a proper Protectorate is created for New Guinea, whether the English Government will not extend the Protectorate over other islands. This question touches on the relationship in which we should stand to the Pacific Islands, and how the Pacific should in future be governed. That may be termed the first question which arises before I come to deal with the question of the Federal Council; and I apprehend that to New Zealand, more than to the Continent of Australia, the future government of the Pacific Islands is of immense importance. It was pointed out long ago, by a celebrated geographer — Guyot — that New Zealand was, strange to say, the centre of what he termed "the Water Hemisphere;" and it was pointed out by him that, if New Zealand made the most of her opportunities, she would come to be looked upon as the centre of the Pacific Islands, giving to them her manufactured goods and receiving from them their raw products, being looked upon as their commercial depot. And I may point out that, in the older days, this was seen by many in New Zealand. The honourable member for Auckland East, in the grants of land which he made to various Churches for the purpose of education, put a provision in his grants that the endowment was to be held for the purpose of educating, not only the people of New Zealand, but children from the Pacific Islands; and I believe it was his intention that the sons of chiefs from many of the Pacific Islands should receive education in New Zealand, and, after they left New Zealand, carry with them the culture obtained here, and thus help to civilize the Pacific Islands. I may go further and say that this colony has enormous interest in the question how the Pacific Islands are to be governed in the future. There are three points of view from which this question of the future of the Pacific Islands may be looked at. There is, first, the danger of a foreign Power having control in the Pacific Islands, in the—I hope far remote-contingency of any troubles or war arising in which we may become implicated. There is, then, the question of danger to us through any of the Pacific Islands being made dépots for European criminals. Then, there is the third point of view, to which I have slightly referred—namely, the need of closer trade relationship. As to the first danger, of foreign dominion in the Pacific, I apprehend that we, who are laying the foundations of a new nation, must look far ahead into the future and remember this: that even a slight thing may alter what is termed the tide of history. And if we so provide that the whole of the Pacific Islands shall be united together in some bond of

friendship, and that, whether they are peopled | by one nationality or another of Europe, the whole of the islands shall be bound together by some tie, so that, whatever European troubles might arise, we might see no war in the Pacific - if we could lay down the lines of such an agreement, we should be doing a great deal for our future, and for the future of the race. Then, as to the further question of criminal dépôts, we are met with this ques-tion now. We see what has passed lately—even since the Convention met in Sydney-in the Senate in France, where a very able report has been presented — a precis of which has been sent out by the Agent-General—pointing out that the French must make New Caledonia, at all events, a dépôt for her worst — her relapsed — criminals. Of course these re-lapsed criminals are to be sent a thousand now and a thousand again, and they may not harm us in one sense. That is, few of them may come to New Zealand, and the few who do come may have very little influence on our population. But we must look at it from this point of view: If you have one of the Pacific Islands set apart as a dépôt for the relapsed criminals of Europe, what does that mean? You have, so to speak, a centre of infection. No one, I am sure, would object to France, Germany, or any of the great European Powers having an outlet for their surplus population as well as England has. It would be a very selfish policy if we tried to prevent any European Power having colonies in the Pacific Islands. But if we have New Caledonia and perhaps other parts set aside as dépôts for criminals, we cannot overlook the effect of such a policy. We are to have the worst kind of criminalsnot merely political criminals; they are recidivistes or relapsed criminals; and all history shows that there is a great deal of truth in the doctrine of heredity. We have not merely a savage race, but the worst kind of race — the criminal one — placed in the Pacific Islands to be a centre of infection for the whole of the Pacific; and, if this is allowed to go on without protest, we may have Germany and other European nations looking upon the Pacific Islands as a proper place to get rid of their criminals. Some may say that there has been too much made of this question; but I do not think so, and I think the Convention in Sydney, and the Hon. Mr. Service, of Victoria, deserve great credit for the stand they have taken in protesting against the French possessions being turned into mere criminal dépôts. I only regret that perhaps it was not pointed out to the French people that the making of their colonies mere dépôts for criminals injures their colonies, and injures the French possessions. I do not know if enough was made of that in the discussion that has taken place in regard to the recidiviste question. The other question is that of trade relationship. I shall not take up time by dwelling upon that. We have had some slight discussion on that already this session in reference to the South Sea Trading Bill, and the providing for a subsidized mail service for Samoa, Tonga, and other islands. I do not

think I need refer to the New Hebrides question, because honourable members will remember that in 1878 that question was taken up by the then Government; a memorandum was written by Sir George Grey, and a short note by myself, which were sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, pointing out that the New Hebrides ought to be a British possession: in fact, it once was included in the boundaries of New Zealand. I now come to the question of the Federal Council, because, as I understand, it is on that question there is most difference of opinion. I wish to point out that this question of a Federal Council for Australasia is not new. In 1856 the question was agitated in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and amongst colonists temporarily residing in London. It is useful to refer to what took place twenty-seven or twenty-eight years ago for this purpose: to show how our ideas on federation have grown during past years along with the growth of the colonies. In those days the question of federation was considered a small matter compared with what it is now. Take, for example, one of the speeches made by Mr. Deas Thomson, of Sydney, who pointed out what was meant by a Federal Council. To him a Federal Council meant a Council dealing with seven subjects: tariff, postal communication, intercolonial railways, electric telegraphs, lands, gold fields, and lighthouses. I find that the newspapers of that day - the Melbourne Argus, for example - thought that the other questions that would be involved in the question of a Federal Council would be the formation of Courts of Appeal, and the question of defence for the colonies. A memorial was prepared by Mr. Wentworth, of Sydney, then in London, setting forth the need of a Federal Council. I cannot do more than refer honourable members who desire to get up the history of this subject to the report dealing with the question, prepared by some of the ablest men in Victoria in September, 1857. I may simply point out that they raised the ques-tion whether there should not be a Federal Council or a Consultative Council, or something between the two. I refer to this simply to show the changes that have arisen in our circumstances, and the changes that have arisen in the ideas of the people on this subject of federation. Twenty-seven or twenty-eight years ago New Zealand was not deemed a colony interested in the question, and there was no idea of bringing New Zealand into the proposed federal bond: in fact, Federation was looked upon more in the nature of what may be termed a continental union. What I ask this House to-night to consider is this question of union: I earnestly ask the House not to do anything that will put a stop to the idea of union. It may be that we are not ripe for federation. I do not think we are. But, whether we are ripe for it or not, we should take up this attitude: that every step we take should be taken with care, and should be taken, I believe, in a direction towards unity and towards greater amity existing between the colonies. I am forcibly reminded of this: that even we in New

Zealand have no idea of what the Continent of I Australia is. I do not think we have even an idea of the vast resources of one colony, looked at merely from a national point of view. I do not think we have realized what the future of Australasia must be, and I think that a few words of Tennyson are applicable to us in our position. We do not sufficiently realize position.

The vast republies that may grow,
The Federations and the powers;
Titanic forces taking birth
In divers seasons, divers climes;
For we are ancients of the earth
And in the morning of the times And in the morning of the times.

I wish to-night to give a few statistics just to bring before honourable members what the Continent of Australia is. As honourable gentlemen probably know, I have never lived in Australia; but even passing through it as a traveller, and seeing the vast extent of its resources, makes me think that we in New Zealand do not recognize the extent of that continent. Let me give a few statistics—and I shall only give a few — showing what Australia is. Take even the Colony of New South Wales. Would any one believe that New South Wales, in extent, is as large as the whole of Germany and half of France combined? Would any one believe, again, that the Colony of Queensland is more than three times the size of the German Empire? And then, if we take South Australia, with its vast extension northwards to the Gulf of Carpentaria, it amounts, in fact, to about four and a half times the extent of the whole of Germany. If you take, now, the whole of the area of Australia, including Tasmania, you will find that it means the enormous territory of 3,053,156 square miles. The area of France, in round numbers, is about 204,000 square miles, and of Germany 208,000 square miles; while even the United States, with Alaska and all those territories added, has only an area of 3,501,404 square miles. Bearing these facts in mind, we can appreciate how enormous the territory of Australia is. And, then, one must also remember how small the United States were when they became the United States. They were not as large even as Queensland when they became States, on the Declaration of Independence day. If in addition we consider the enormous mineral resources of New South Wales and Queensland, their agricultural products, and the vast future that must lie before them, with the vast population they will sustain— if, I say, we remember these things, we should weigh carefully how we, as a colony, declare to stand aloof from the Continent of Australia. Keeping that in mind, I shall now briefly point out what this Federal Council means; because it seems to me that there has been some misapprehension as to the proposals of the Convention. I may say at once that it will be seen from our resolutions that we propose something intermediate between Federal Councils and Conventions of Delegates consulting, because we recognize that no Parliament should pass any law which goes too far in advance of public opinion, and, if it be that public opinion in this colony is not ripe for federation, it would be unwise for this Parlia-

ment to pass any law which did not carry with it the sympathies of the people. what is this Federal Council Bill? Let me, in as few words as possible, bring before the House what may be termed a bird's-eye view of the Bill. The Bill provides that a Federal Council shall be constituted, and that the sessions shall be held once in every two years in some colony; but the Governor may call a special session, and the representatives of the different colonies are to be chosen as each colonial Parliament may decide. Then, there is to be an elected President, and only one Chamber; and there must be a majority of the whole number of the members of the Council for the time being, representing a majority of the colonies present, before there is a quorum. This is a very important provision. As to its legislative authority, it is to deal with the following matters:

"(a.) The relations of Australasia with the

islands of the Pacific;

"(b.) Prevention of the influx of criminals; "(c.) Fisheries in Australasian waters beyond territorial limits;

" (d.) The service of civil process of the Courts of any colony within Her Majesty's possessions in Australasia out of the jurisdiction of the colony in which it is issued;

"(e.) The enforcement of judgments of Courts of law of any colony beyond the limits of the

colony;
"(f.) The enforcement of criminal process
beyond the limits of the colony in which it is issued, and the extradition of offenders (including deserters of wives and children, and deserters from the Imperial or colonial naval or military forces);

"(g.) The custody of offenders on board of ships belonging to Her Majesty's colonial Governments beyond territorial limits.'

It will be observed that these are all matters over which this Legislature has practically no control, because we cannot deal with them without the consent of the Home Government granting us authority to do so by special Imperial Act. With regard to our relations to the Pacific Islands, we have no jurisdiction beyond three miles outside our waters, without special delegation from the Home Government. Thereforce this Bill confers a power on New Zealand, for it gives it a share in legislating on matters with which at present it cannot deal. Then, as to the prevention of an influx of criminals, we have power to pass laws on the subject, but there could be no general law, and therefore this gives us greater power. In the same way, additional power is given with regard to dealing with fisheries in waters beyond territorial limits; and so it is with the subjects treated of in the remaining subsections. All these provisions confer on the Federal Council a legislative authority which we do not possess, and therefore it does not take anything away from this Parliament. It really gives to New Zealand a greater legislative power than she has at present. The only matters in which legislative power is given to the Federal Council which might be said to weaken our present legislative

power are contained in subsection (h) of the same clause of the Bill:—

"General defences, quarantine, patents of invention and discovery, copyright, bills of exchange and promissory notes, uniformity of weights and measures, recognition in other colonies of any marriage or divorce duly solemnized or decreed in any colony, naturalization and aliens, status of corporations and joint-

stock companies." It will be noticed, however, that none of these things can be dealt with by the Federal Council unless remitted to it by two colonies, and the law passed by the Federal Council is only operative in the colonies which ask for the interference of the Federal Council. Now, we ask, in these resolutions, to limit the power of the Federal Council to this extent: that a law passed by the Council shall not have effect in this colony, even if remitted to it by our colony, until it is sanctioned by our own Legislature. If, therefore, the resolutions which we ask the House to pass to-night are passed, it will be seen that there can be no interference whatever with our Legislature, and it would not in any way weaken our legislative power. As I pointed out before, this is a case in which we ask for something intermediate between a purely Federal Council and some convention of delegates consulting together for some common purpose. And, now, having stated what the object of the Federal Council Bill is, and what its provisions are, I hope I have said enough to show that it does not, as has been represented by some persons, take away any legislative powers from New Zealand. The only legislative powers that could be taken away are those contained in subsection (h), and for none of those objects can a law be passed which will have effect in this colony until the colonial Parliament has assented to it. We should not be weakened; on the contrary, we should have a voice in legislation which we do not possess now, and cannot possibly possess under our present Constitu-tion. That being so, I now come to meet some of the objections that may be raised to this question of federation. First of all, I would impress upon the House that, if we stand aloof and pass some amendment to the effect that, because we are insular, we should have nothing to do with the Continent of Australia, we shall be taking a fatal step as regards New Zealand. Even on the narrow ground of common defence, we cannot stand aloof from Australia; and I go further and say that, if we stand aloof from Australia and break off relations with it, as some honourable members propose, we shall have no voice whatever in the future of the Pacific Islands, and in the various questions that must arise between England and her colonies, and between those colonies themselves and the islands of the Pacific. To stand aloof and take up an isolated position will not strengthen us, but will rather tend to weaken us; and I ask the House to look upon the question as it will affect our future. No doubt if we did anything to destroy our in-

I admit that, at once; but, as far as colony. this Bill is concerned, I see no risk of merging our individuality in a large Australasian Dominion, or losing any of our power. The only danger lies in subsection (h), and that we have guarded against by the limitation we have put in requiring that any law passed on those subjects shall not have any force until sanctioned by our Legislature. That would give us immunity from any peril of losing our individuality. Now, there is another objection which has been urged to this federation, and it is this: I find on the Order Paper a resolution dealing with the wider question of Imperial federation. The honourable member for Auckland East thinks that, if we take this step in Australasian federation, that may tend to destroy any hope of what is termed Imperial federation; and the honourable member for Wairarapa asks that we should add a resolution pointing out the need of Imperial federation. Sir, I be-lieve the closer we can make the alliance between the Mother-country and the colonies the better. I believe also, with the honourable member for Auckland East, that, if we could get a close alliance amongst all English-speaking peoples, it would be an immense advantage to the race, and would perhaps prevent future wars and troubles. But I am forcibly reminded of a passage which I have met with in one of the Epistles, which I shall paraphrase. If we cannot love our Australian neighbours, who are near to us, and with whom we are acquainted and in intimate trade relationship, how can we love those of our race that are so far distant from us? I say, if we can show that we can ally ourselves with those who are near to us,-if we can come to an amicable arrangement or agreement with them,-it will be a proof that there is some chance of this Imperial federation, and this greater English - speaking federation. But, if we show by our action that we cannot unite even on such elementary matters as these provided in the Federal Council Bill, then what is the use of talking about Imperial federation? In one sense we have now Imperial federation. We are part of the British Empire; and, although we have no voice in her foreign policy, yet I do not know that it would be wise for this colony to attempt to have any voice in her foreign policy, because we must take, along with that, a corresponding responsibility, and we must pay for it out of our taxes, and we must be liable to all the incidents that bind one part of the Empire with the other. There is one passage in one of Mr. Gladstone's speeches, delivered something like seventeen or eighteen years ago, pointing out the strong position the colonies occupied-something better and stronger than Imperial federation—which I think appropriate, and will quote. Speaking on a Canadian Loan Bill in the House of Commons, he says,-

"We have for a full quarter of a century acknowledged absolutely the right of self-government in the colonies. We do not expect the laws of Canada or of Australia to be modulated according to our own ideas. We grant

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them a greater freedom from interference than, as amongst the three kingdoms, the Legislature grants to the peculiar ideas that may happen to prevail in one of those three. We have carried it to this point: that, as far as regards the Administration, I believe it may be said that the only officer appointed by the Colonial Secretary is the Governor; and I believe there cannot be a doubt that, if it were the wellascertained desire of the colonies to have the appointment of their own Governor, the Imperial Parliament would at once make over to

them that power." That shows the enormous power that the colonies have been given—a power such as no colonies of other empires ever possessedpower, I may say, unique in history. And I say, with regard to this wider question of Imperial federation, that we are not ripe for that. If we are ripe for anything, we are only ripe for this Australasian federation. We are not even ripe for complete federation with the other colonies, because that would go further than this Federal Council Bill goes. But we are ripe for what is stated in the resolutions -namely, for bringing us into closer and more intimate connection with the Australian Colo-But how is this Imperial federation to be brought about? How is it to be managed? The House of Commons will not give up its power; and I think that, if we are not ripe for Australasian federation now, we shall not be ripe for Imperial federation perhaps a century hence. The objection that has been urged namely, that this will, in some way or other, prevent Imperial federation—I think I have sufficiently answered. And, now, let me look at some of the dangers of federation. I admit that there are dangers in federation. There is always a danger of a strong Government overriding weak Governments. saw that in Provincialism. We saw We saw what may be termed the federal States of New Zealand being wiped out by the central Government as soon as there came a strong financial pressure; and I regret to notice that some Australian statesmen, who are advocating this federation, are continually using the word "dominion," as if this Australasian dominion, as they term it, is to be akin to Canada. I think we are not ripe for that. The question of dominion goes far beyond federation, and the proposals contained in this Federal Council Bill. That is one danger. There is always the danger of the central Government overriding the weaker Governments; but I do not see, if we agree to this Federal Council Bill, that any danger can arise from that, because this Council is exceedingly limited in its jurisdiction; and I apprehend that the Imperial Government would never for one moment hesitate to give the right to any colony to leave this Federation. If there was any doubt about that, there could be a clause inserted in the Bill, so that on the face of its charter there should be the right of secession granted to any colony in the event of its desiring to leave the Federation. As far as that question is concerned, I do not see that any

danger can arise from it; but, if there be a danger from union with Australia, because of the Federal Council overriding us, how much greater would the danger be if the federation were Imperial and if we were united to England! That would be a danger tenfold greater. I think I have said enough to show that it ought not to be the policy of New Zealand to at once break off negotiations with the Australian Colonies and to pursue a policy of isolation. Of course in this respect we are placed under a great disadvantage in discussing this question by the New South Wales representative Chamber declining, by one vote, to even discuss this Federal Council Bill. Those who know the history of New South Wales politics can, however, tell the reason why. I believe that the feeling amongst the New South Wales people for federation, for union, is far stronger than in the Parliament of that colony. Political parties are divided there; old feuds exist; and the feeling against Victoria, and the City of Melbourne especially, is so strong with some of the older New South Wales politicians that they will have nothing to do with anything that is pressed forward by Victoria. I believe that had a great deal to do with the non-success of the resolutions in the Sydney Parliament. I have said that in that respect we are placed at a disad-The representative Chamber has not vantage. concurred in these resolutions, though in the Council they have agreed to them and passed them by a considerable majority. What, then, should we do in this matter? I again urge the House not to pursue a policy of isolation, and the resolutions are so framed as to prevent this. I do not care much about Resolution (e)whether it be put or not; and, to allow the most ample opportunity to the members to record their opinions, I shall ask that the resolutions be put separately. This Resolution (e) may be in one respect unnecessary, for the resolutions go on to show what alterations should be made in the Federal Council Bill, and, if the alterations are to be made in the Bill, then that simply says that, before the Federal Council Bill is passed, there must be new negotiations, or, rather, negotiations must be continued, and that we cannot agree with the Bill as at present prepared. But let me say one or two words generally about this question from a general point of view. I pointed out that, if we are to have any voice in the future of Australasia and of the Pacific Islands, New Zealand by herself can do little or nothing. I know that we have passed a Confederation Bill—I mean the Act of Sir George Grey's—which enables the Government, if it had received the Queen's assentand we pressed the Agent-General to ask that the Queen's assent should be given to it—to deal with any island that chooses to annex itself to New Zealand. But New Zealand would require the sanction of the Imperial Government to any annexation or union of any island with us; and, if New Zealand was standing aloof from the Australian Colonies, it is not likely the Imperial Government would listen to many of our recommendations. What is to be gained by this question of federation? I ask this House

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to look into the future. I ask this House to remember that we have a national feeling in New Zealand, weak, exceedingly weak, at present, but yearly getting stronger. There is a far stronger national feeling in Australia than in New Zealand. One cannot be in Melbourne, for instance, without realizing that there exists a feeling of Australia for the Australians such as does not exist in New Zealand. There is a far stronger national life there, no doubt caused by there being a metropolis, for we have no centre like Melbourne. I was exceedingly struck by this in Melbourne when the Irish informers attempted to land; I was struck with the strength of feeling amongst all classes that Australia was a nation that had national life and feeling. What will the future of Australia be, if its scattered population has that feeling now? Fifty years hence how many millions of people will be there! And what will be the future of New Zealand if we are to stand aloof and not live on more than terms of amity with our Australian neighbours by being allied to them, in case of war and a dozen things that may occur? At present we are on the best of terms with the Australian Colonies. For example, to show the feeling that exists between us and Victoria, there has not been a single case of small-pox in Melbourne and the suburbs but the Premier of Victoria has wired across to tell us of it, so that we might take all necessary precautions. There is, from the telegrams that pass between this and the other colonies, a strong feeling of friendship existing; and I say we ought to foster it in every possible way we can. Even from a selfish point of view, we ought to encourage a friendly feeling. They have products which we have not, and we have some that they do not possess. These we can ex-change, and trade will increase. We shall not be benefited by isolation. What we require is some such alliance as is here proposed, some kind of Council, not quite federal, but yet more than consulting. And now let me say one or two words more about a general federation. It may be from my early training, but I have always had a horror of war. I look upon all war as criminal; and I have always looked with hope to the time when nations, like individuals, will be able to settle their grievances and differences without an appeal to arms. It seems to me that the very existence of war shows that our civilization is not far advanced beyond the savage state. Well, how is war to be prevented in future? It is only by extending federation. Instead of war conferences we should have peace conferences; and we ought to be careful, in founding our new nation, to lay down some broad lines for our future guidance. How can we lay those better down than by having some such arrangement as is sketched forth in these resolutions? I quite agree with the honourable member for Auckland East in his aspirations for a wider union. I should like to see, in one respect, a stronger bond even between the colonies and the Mother-country. I should like to see that bond not extended to England alone, but I should like to see it extended to the

United States. I do not see why there should not be a federation between the colonies of other countries and ourselves. If we are to have French and German colonists in the Pacific, why should we not have some kind of federation recognized with the colonies of these countries? Whilst the colonists do not deny their allegiance to their Mother-country, they should be united, and there should be some agreement among them, some common meeting-ground among them, on which they could discuss their grievances and their relationship, so as to prevent all war in the future. I see no difficulty in that. If there is a difficulty, then it simply means that this system of standing armies, this system of big navies, of having large sums, shall I say, wasted for the defence of our seaports—that all this is to come upon us, and that, instead of having peace in these new lands, we are to have introduced all the terrible evils of war. What has been the curse of Europe? The enermous standing armies have crushed the population. The expense of the armies and navies has had to be borne by the workers. We are, as yet, merely a handful of people; but if we could, by uniting with the other Australian Colonies, lay down some linenamely, the line of federation—to show to the older countries that, so far as we are concerned. we were to settle our future grievances, not by appeals to arms, but by mutually meeting and discussing our differences, we should be doing something for our race, and something to make us known in history. If it be that the world is so constituted that there is to be nothing but war, war, in the future, then the energies and resources of the people will be fettered. But I believe that there is progress in the world. I believe that the progress of the world is only consistent with peace—consistent with a greater diffusion of education. If you get peace notions diffused, that is, perhaps, the highest kind of education; so that what a modern poet has predicted may come true,-There shall come a time when brotherhood shows

Federation.

stronger
Than the narrow bounds which now distract the world;

World,
When the cannons roar and trumpet blare no longer,
And the ironclad rusts, and battle-flags are furled;
When the bars of creed and speech and race, which

sever, Shall be fused in one humanity for ever.

Sir, I move the resolutions standing in my name.

Motion made, and question proposed,-"Whereas, at a meeting of delegates from the following colonies—namely, Fiji, New South Wales, New Zealand, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia-held in Sydney during November and December, 1883, the following resolutions were agreed to:

"'1. That further acquisition of dominion in the Pacific, south of the Equator, by any foreign Power would be highly detrimental to the safety and well-being of the British possessions in Australasia, and injurious to the interests of the Empire:

"'2. That this Convention refrains from suggesting the action by which effect can best

be given to the foregoing resolution, in the confident belief that the Imperial Government will promptly adopt the wisest and most effectual measures for securing the safety and contentment of this portion of Her Majesty's domin-

"'3. That, having regard to the geographical position of the Island of New Guinea, the rapid extension of British trade and enterprise in Torres Straits, the certainty that the island will shortly be the resort of many adventurous subjects of Great Britain and other nations, and the absence or inadequacy of any existing laws for regulating their relations with the native tribes, this Convention, while fully recognizing that the responsibility of extending the boundaries of the Empire belongs to the Imperial Government, is emphatically of opinion that such steps should be immediately taken as will most conveniently and effectively secure the incorporation with the British Empire of so much of New Guinea, and the small islands adjacent thereto, as is not claimed by the Government of the Netherlands:

"'4. That, although the understanding arrived at in 1878 between Great Britain and France, recognizing the independence of the New Hebrides, appears to preclude this Convention from making any recommendation inconsistent with that understanding, the Convention urges upon Her Majesty's Government that it is extremely desirable that such understanding should give place to some more definite engagement, which shall secure those islands from falling under any foreign dominion; at the same time, the Convention trusts that Her Majesty's Government will avail itself of any opportunity that may arise for negotiating with the Government of France, with the object of obtaining the control of those islands, in the interests of Australasia:

"'5. That the Governments represented at this Convention undertake to submit and recommend to their respective Legislatures measures of permanent appropriation for defraying, in proportion to population, such share of the cost incurred in giving effect to the foregoing resolutions as Her Majesty's Government, having regard to the relative importance of Imperial and Australasian interests, may deem fair and reasonable:

"'6. That the Convention protests, in the strongest manner, against the declared intention of the Government of France to transport large numbers of relapsed criminals to the French possessions in the Pacific, and urges Her Majesty's Government to use every means in its power to prevent the adoption of a course so disastrous to the interests of Australasia and the Pacific Islands:

"'7. That the Convention expresses a confident hope that no penal settlement for the reception of European criminals will long continue to exist in the Pacific, and invites Her Majesty's Government to make to the Government of France such serious representations on this

subject as may be deemed expedient:'
"And whereas, at the said Convention, a draft Bill to constitute a Federal Council of Aus-

tralasia was also agreed to: And whereas, in pursuance of the undertaking given by the delegates from the Colony of New Zealand, it is desirable that the resolutions of the said Convention should be submitted to this Legis-

"This House resolves,-

"That it agrees generally with the resolutions of the said Convention; but, in order that its views may be specifically expressed, it resolves as follows:

"(a.) That it approves of the steps taken by the British Government for the establishment of its rule over New Guinea, and hopes that like measures will be taken for a Protectorate over the islands of the Pacific Ocean not under the dominion of any stable Government:

" (b.) That this colony is willing to pay, in proportion to its population, a share in the sum of £15,000 proposed by the Imperial Govern-

ment:

"(c.) That it desires respectfully to protest against the transportation of criminals to the

French possessions in the Pacific:
"(d.) That it requests the British Government to make such representations to the European Powers as will prevent the maintenance of penal establishments in any of the Pacific Islands :

"(e.) That the establishment of such a Federal Council as is proposed in the Convention's

draft Bill is premature :

"(f.) That, so far as the Bill aims at enabling the colonies to jointly initiate legislation on questions of common interest and importance to the several colonies, it has the cordial sup-

port of, this House: "(g.) That, to place the proposed measure in accordance with these opinions, it will be necessary to vary the Bill, so as to provide—First, that the Federal Council shall not make representations to the Imperial Government direct, but to the several Colonial Governments; second, that any measure it initiates shall not have any force within any colony, nor affect any colony, until it is adopted by the Legislature of such colony."—(Mr. Stout.)

Sir G. GREY.—I desire to move an amendment to the first part of the resolution of the honourable member—that is, that part which says that this House generally agrees with the resolutions passed by the assembly of delegates that met in Sydney last year. The amendment is before the House, and I shall not read it now. We have heard a very eloquent speech indeed from the Premier, and the House has received it, I am glad to say, very well; but still I cannot myself agree with a great part of his speech. And what I would first say is this: that I feel uncertain whether I ought in any way to identify myself with the proceed-ings of this night. For, if it is meant that at the end of the session, when so many members have left already, and others are about to leave, in so thin a House, the carrying of this resolution should be considered to bind the Colony of New Zealand, I think that I ought perhaps in no way to identify myself with a proceeding of the kind. I think the most we

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can possibly do to-night is to discuss this subject, and that that should be the understanding. If it should be said that after a long and protracted (session - now, when all the business is disposed of; when, as I have said, many members have left Wellington-the decision of the majority, in so thin a House, is to bind the whole Colony of New Zealand for all time as to matters which must affect its happiness and welfare as long as New Zealand shall last—if that is the intention, then I say the Government are following a very improper course. I shall speak, therefore, under the supposition that nothing but a discussion is now to take place. I will first address myself to a few points alluded to by the Premier, and afterwards I will take a review of the larger question which I have introduced in the amendment I intend to propose to this House. The Premier drew a most interesting picture of the Continent of Australia, of its great resources, and of how great its popula-tion would hereafter be. He drew a very fine picture, and an interesting picture, of these circumstances; and he then put it to us: Was it for us to hold ourselves aloof from a federation with so great and so populous a continent as that will hereafter be? And then a thought came into my own mind instantly: What caused the greatness of Great Britain-what caused her might, her majesty, her power? It was the fact that she was by position isolated from the Continent of Europe—that she was not bound up with it in any federation in which her influence would have been small, and was therefore not necessarily disturbed by the contests that took place between different na-tions: she could thus in all cases pursue an independent course. The honourable gentleman went on afterwards to speak of his own horror of war, in which feeling I have no doubt every one of us here participates. He spoke of the vast standing armies maintained in Europe, and asked if we wished such things here. I felt that he answered his own question. I felt this: that it was the conflicting interests existing on the Continent, and the different populations occupying the soil, which led to those terrific wars and those vast standing armies, and that England, until a comparatively recent period, stood alone with no standing army at all, and always maintained a very small one. I felt that his own argument answered the very question he was rais-I think the House will agree with me that really the greatness of England, her tranquillity — the fact that no foreign foe has for centuries ventured to place his foot within her shores—that her safety from the great revolutions which have taken place upon the Continent, the many breakings-up of territories, the constant wars — that her freedom from all these things arose from her isolation and the position she held, which enabled her to pursue her own destiny and to work out, unrestricted by the pressure of any powerful exterior federal council, that great task which Providence has placed before her. All these things should make us careful of what we do

in our present emergency, and that the few who are here to-night should not take upon themselves the responsibility of determining this question for all time for all New Zealand. It may be said to me, in answer to that, that Australia will be occupied by a population like our own; to which I reply, That is an impossibility. A great part of Australia must be occupied in the main by coloured races. In no other way can her products be developed, and the sources of wealth which exist within that great continent be brought to light and made beneficial to all mankind. She must in great part be occupied by great coloured races, probably ruled by a few Europeans — that is, few as compared with the magnitude of the population that will be in the separate parts of that great dominion. For this must be borne in mind: that coloured populations are, as a rule, incapable of carrying on the free institutions which we Anglo-Saxons are accustomed to. I have never yet, in any country made up of coloured populations, seen these institutions worked successfully as they are with us; and I believe there would be a very great difficulty indeed in establishing free institutions and in maintaining them throughout the whole of Australia. It is true that it may be inhabited by coloured races of a milder character, and perhaps not addicted to those cruelties which negroes have committed. For instance, visit the Island of St. Domingo at any time, and you will find that there is no part of that island in which revolutions are not occurring, and in which the most cruel atrocities are not taking place—some Emperor of the hour brought forth to be shot, and military executions taking place in all parts. You may not have that evil in Australia, but then you must have a large coloured population throughout a very considerable portion of that country. Now, where such diversity of race exists, I feel satisfied that hereafter there will be repeated disturbances, and, when many millions inhabit. that country, large armies must be maintained in different parts of it. I ask any honourable gentleman here whether any single person in New Zealand would determine to remain dead and careless to the appeals of their fellow-countrymen in Australia whenever aid is required. But to join ourselves in one Federal Council, to give up our national independence, is a thing which I cannot contemplate without fear. am sure that to enter upon a course of that kind is to enter upon a course that must lead to disaster, ultimately to civil wars-to enter upon a course that will damp our energies, and will gradually isolate us from the Mother-country. Now, will honourable gentlemen put this question to themselves? Let them say, "We are federated in part already to Great Britain. We are federated in the best possible way, for we speak directly to our own parent. We speak to our parent as one of a number of children. If other parts of the dominion differ from her, we may be able to agree with her upon some subject, and if we do so it will be our pleasure to encourage her to persevere in the course which she, conjointly

with ourselves, considers right and just, and this may often strengthen her in her diffi-culties. We are attached to her as our proper mother, and she, as our proper mother, is attached to us as one of her children. We act as we please." But if we become one of nine or ten countries joined to speak with a common voice and to act together, it is quite possible that more than one-half of the countries so joined together might take one view of what Great Britain was doing upon any particular subject, whilst the remaining States might take another view. But all would be bound by the will of the majority, and so it might happen that we should be one of the number who agreed with Great Britain, and yet we should be compelled, against our convictions, to pronounce against that which we thought just, righteous, and good to do at that particular period. What pain that would give us! what a degradation it would be if we were placed in such a position! Why should we seek to do that to show our great love for our neighbour? Sometimes Scripture is wrongly quoted — wrongly quoted and wrongly under-stood; and I hold the Premier wrongly quoted Scripture, and wrongly understood it, when he asked, if we did not love our near neighbour in Australia, how could we bear any love to Great Britain, so much further away? but if we loved the one near at hand, then of necessity we must love the other also. I say we can love both equally well. The meaning of the passage is this, as I read it: that the man who hates or despises his brother, and has no good feeling towards his neighbour, must have a bad heart, and can have no good feeling towards anybody. Now, have we not a good feeling towards Australia? Have we no good feeling to all the communities in that country? Why, because we refuse to submit ourselves to a bond, to a yoke being put upon our necks—because we refuse to join in a combination in which we should be only one among s great number of communities bound in a Federal Council; for we must always be a small minority in such a Council—I say, why should we, because we refuse to do that, be accused of want of love for our brother? They will always have certain interests in common with each other which will not be our interests. We cannot have perfect community with them, although we may love them. They may submit to the introduction of coloured labour into their colonies, and it might suit them: but why should we submit to that when it would not suit us? They may take a course in that respect and make general laws which may threaten to lower the tone and style of their living and civilization; but would it be to our advantage that we should submit to that, in order that Australia might be cultivated as it ought to be? Such a question would be certain to arise. Why should we run the chance of what we might think wrong and destructive of our best interests? The Premier pointed out also to us that no powers are to be taken from us by the Federal Council, and that the powers

given to the Federal Council as far as we desire them would increase our powers; but he did not say that gentlemen who come to this House will have their powers increased as representatives of the people of New Zealand. He said that, if the Home Government gave this Federal Council greater powers than you exercise now, you will, as far as you assist in the Federal Council to exercise these powers, be greater men than you are now. But I say you will be lesser men. I say that the vicarious exercise of these powers by two delegates among so many is not to exercise them at But I will tell you what the Premier concealed from you—what he shut out from your knowledge. I say that, if, instead of joining this confederation, you remain an in-dependent nation, as I believe you ought to be, and Great Britain gives these powers to the Federal Council of Australia, to you, as a nation, the same powers will be given, and you can then exercise them freely. This will lift your statesmen, and your national feeling, higher. It will teach you to deal with great questions such as statesmen ought to deal with. But, if the Federal Council only is to exercise these powers, that element of greatness will be taken from you for ever, and you will never rise to the performance of duties which all great men who love their country desire to perform. That point was not properly put before you. I ask you again, upon this ground, to insist, as you have a right to do, that all powers given to the Federal Council of Australia shall be given to you as the Then, the Premier told New Zealand nation. us that, when he went to Melbourne, he was struck by this: the existence of national life in an advanced stage, such as does not exist in New Zealand. Well, to that I answer, I think it is a superficial observation. I believe that as much love of country, as much patriotio feeling, exists here as exists in Australia and I believe that it exists even in a still warmer degree. I believe the Premier, if I may say so, misrepresented the New Zealand nation in what he then said. Now, further, let me tell you this: that it is my firm belief and I think all will join with me in that belief when you consider the question—that, if you join the Federal Council of Australasia, the effect will be to weaken our national life, to weaken our patriotism, and that becoming part of another State would injure in every respect the people of this colony. If you long truly for national life—if you long to be a nation—to become part of a larger territory is not the way to secure your wish. That also is not the way to federate ultimately on equal terms with the Empire. That is not the way to be on equal terms with every English-speaking nation which exists upon the face of the globe. How can you federate with the Empire under such circumstances? What would you have to do with Great Britain if you only spoke to her through your Federal Council?—because that must be the case. That is what it must come to. You are really now federated with Great Britain as a part of the Empire. You

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correspond direct with your parent State through her Secretaries of State. You can appeal to her upon any subject you like—upon the policy of the Empire, if you choose. In any single way that you choose you can apany single way that you choose you can't proach your Sovereign or the great Parliament of Great Britain. You really are, in these respects, independent: rather, I may say, you are like a kingdom in yourselves, approaching a great monarch who has many kings under him. You speak almost as equals. But how will you speak if you speak through a Federal Council in Australia? What do you know of the Australian statesmen? What regard can you have for a Council of that kind? With what personal attachment would you regard them? Is it with the same regard that you would regard your own children when they rise to be great statesmen and leaders of men? Not at all. It is the men born among you, and who rise to great positions—these are the men for whom you will have a feeling of true regard. What feelings can you have for persons separated from you by such distances? For them you may have a general love, a general friendship, a general desire; but that is not the feeling which the inhabitants of a country have towards those born amongst them who rule their destinies. I might dilate upon these subjects for a long period of time, but the reply I have given to the Premier will be a reply to all. The mothers of New Zealand will explain what I mean. Again, this territory of New Zealand is sufficiently large to render it able to stand by itself; and to have New Zealand and Australia separate nations would create emulation, and emulation advances nations more than any other feeling. A desire that your statesmen shall surpass other statesmen will make great men of them. A desire that your institutions shall be freer than those of other countries will secure to you freer and better institutions. A desire that your people should be better instructed and more learned than those of other nations close to them will induce you to provide for your people education of the best kind. A desire that justice should be better adminis-tered within your territories than in other countries, of the actions of which you are spectators and witnesses, will induce you to have better Courts of justice, better institutions, and better laws. Let that emulation be kept alive, and do not dwarf yourselves by becoming one State of a great and distant community consisting of many States with common interests different from yours. And now let us just look at the world in its present state, and the position we occupy in it. The Premier has given us one picture of it: but I will ask you to look at the present state of the Anglo-Saxon nations; and, first, I will ask you to consider that in everything they take the lead.

Take their statesmen. Do they not on the whole surpass those of other races? Then, they have better laws than any other nations. Where is the proof? I say that all nations copy our laws, and when any portion of the community go a distance from the Mother-country they

carry her laws with them and are attached to them. The United States still build their laws up on the old laws of England; they still adopt our laws; they still are fond of the laws and institutions they possess; and they endeavour, to the present day, to copy what is done in England. It is not twelve months ago since one of the very ablest men in the United States wrote to me and said, "Notwithstanding all our great progress, notwithstanding the advances we have made, notwithstanding our great wealth, our great population, we still look to England as the centre of all that is great and good. We still imitate her laws; we still prize most of her institutions; we still look to her in many things, and respect and admire almost all that that great nation does. No dislike whatever has grown up between the United States and Great Britain. You will find that daily their bonds are drawn tighter." for a time they are separated and apart; and who can lament now that such became the case? Whilst we desire a federation, we are satisfied that the United States should be independent as they are; and, upon the whole, it has tended to the happiness of both Great Britain and the United States. I cannot help feeling that the progress of the United States has arisen from the great statesmen who seem, upon every emergency when a man is required, to spring up wherever the Anglo-Saxon race has placed its foot. Then, look again at our seamen. Why, there is no other race that can com-pass the world with its shipping as we do. We produce seamen who dare everything. If discoveries are to be made, they are foremost in the field. If nothing else is to be done, they must get to the North or South Pole and do something which no other seamen have achieved before. With all their hardihood, they possess a generous character which attaches populations to them wherever they go. Follow them throughout the trackless ocean to all lands, and you find that they leave as favourites every spot they visit. They confront every danger and storm at sea fearlessly; they literally are masters of the ocean. Turn again to our army. Our soldiers can traverse every country in the world in health. They have constitutions that enable them to pass through every degree of cold and heat. They subsist on all diets. Then, look at one great peculiarity of this race again. It is this: They can endear themselves to the inhabitants of almost every country they go amongst. They exercise at once an influence. They become admitted to be leaders, and seem fitted to be rulers. They seem to be endowed with a disposition which enables them really to master all parts of the world. That is one great advantage we have. And should we run any chance of preventing people of that kind and character throughout the whole world becoming confederated in one great community? If you think we should aim at a result of that kind, I contend that that can only be done by isolated nations bound in a confederation, each being able to exercise its own choice, and to come into such a con-

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federation whenever it chooses. A very small | proportion indeed might prevent us hereafter, if we were joined to Australia, from entering into any free federation with any other Power, and might cause wars, disasters, and difficulties of every kind. Therefore I say, on these grounds alone, ask nothing of the kind. Be satisfied at present by being par-ticles federated to the great British Empire. Then, again, look at the Anglo-Saxon race at this moment. The whole highways of the world belong to us. Start from England and you can traverse the Mediterranean. There we are masters. We command ports at both ends, and strong islands in the centre of that Then, again, the Canal that opens the whole Eastern world to us is in our possession. Arabia herself gives points on which we have strong forts that enable us to hold all those seas. Come on to Australia, and to this part of the world, and everywhere we are masters; everywhere we own the whole highways of the ocean. One point the Premier, I think, missed, and one point I think the Australian Colonies missed, and that is that the occupation of New Guinea, so far from being a matter of no consequence to us, is a matter of the utmost importance. Its possession commands another highway, the narrow passage through Torres Straits—a highway of almost the same importance to us as the Suez Canal. It is well worth our while, I believe, not only to pay our share of the first £15,000, but also our share of the second £15,000, to secure that great highway of commerce, not only for ourselves, but for all the Anglo-Saxon Recollecting that, I think that we, instead of being niggardly in helping our parent State when she does occupy positions of that kind which secure the commerce of the earth to the Anglo-Saxon race, should step forward with all our might and power, and gladly make any sacrifice. Then, look at the Panama Canal. That, again, will be held by people speaking the Anglo - Saxon language. Then, look at another peculiarity of our race, and that is that, unlike other nations, whilst we spread over the whole world, we do not scatter ourselves about. Wherever the Anglo-Saxon people settle they are found in masses. Look at the United States; at Canada; look at New Zealand; look at Australia; look at South You will find everywhere we are in Africa. strength. We are gathered together in great masses, which enables us to stand firmly at each separate point, and unite with the parent State against the whole world. There, again, is another cause for our being federated with the British Empire. Why endanger our power of doing that by adding ourselves on to a great neighbouring continent? What would be the position of England if England were bound by federation with Germany, France, Spain, Austria, and Russia, and were unable to act unless she could secure a majority in a Federal Council, in which her number of members would be very small indeed in proportion to those of other nations? Would it be for the benefit of herself and of mankind that federation of that kind should exist? If we were on the

Continent of Australia it would be different. There I think federation is necessary to stand against the common danger of coloured races which they will have to meet. I think that for many places, such as the United States. close federation is a necessity; but none of those arguments apply to ourselves. Then, just look at the question of commerce. there ever a nation that possessed such advantages before as the Anglo-Saxon people? Why, the whole earth pours forth every treesure for us. Nothing is withheld from us. Every kind of vegetable that the world produces is ours; every animal which the world produces is ours; every valuable mineral that the world produces is ours: of all the treasures on the earth which the Creator gave to man, not one is shut out from the Anglo-Saxon people. Was there ever a race before this one that ought so clearly and distinctly to endeavour to come into one common bond of union? Ought we not, therefore, on that ground, to keep in view this one thing: that we must come under no system of federation which would cripple our power of disposing ultimately of our destiny as we please? Let us be masters of ourselves. Why let other men govern our destiny, and prescribe what our future shall be? It seems to me an idea that we ought not for one moment to entertain. Let us remain free. Let us be kind, good, beneficent to Australia, and to all other people with whom we may come in contact. Let us, unembarrassed by any exterior force, spread out from our own centre amongst the countless islands of the Pacific. If a Federal Council is allowed to annex islands as they please, we shall be allowed to do the same thing: and we can do it well. Our traders are already spreading in every direction throughout the Pacific. Most of the islanders speak a language cognate with that of the New Zealand Natives, so that we can easily get into communication with them. There is this great and glorious future before you. Let nothing induce you to restrict the prospect you have in view; let nothing induce you to weaken your own power, your own strength; and let us be true to ourselves, true to Great Britain, true to the race of which we are members. Let us do our duty as a New Zealand nation. Let us help them all, aid them all in every way; but let us not join in any other federation than the Imperial federation with Great Britain—the greatest federation in the world until the far greater opening comes to us of a federation of the whole English - speaking people: which federation, if it ever does exist, will bring into existence a world such as man has never seen - in which war will become an impossibility over the face of the greater part of the earth; in which the world will give greater blessings to man, and the promises of the Creator of the happiness that shall ultimately fall upon the people of the earth will be truly fulfilled by the peace, commerce, and unity that will prevail amongst the one great race which holds all the strongholds, almost all the places of value, in the world. Sir, I move,

as an amendment, That, in the opinion of this House, the confederation of the whole of the English-speaking nations into one great federation is an object of the highest importance, the attainment of which is worthy of great efforts and large sacrifices. That the outlying portions of the British Empire, already respectively federated to some extent with that Empire, and capable of being still more closely united to it, should take no steps for confederation amongst themselves which may embarrass their respective closer union with Great Britain, or which may hereafter render more difficult the confederation of all the English-speaking nations.

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speaking nations. Major ATKINSON. - Sir, I agree with the Premier in feeling very great regret that the Government have not been able to bring on these resolutions at an earlier period of the session; but I am not prepared to blame the honourable gentlemen opposite, for I think it must be evident to us all that it would have been an exceedingly difficult matter, if not an impossibility, to get it on at an earlier period. But, nevertheless, I feel very great regret, for it seems to me that these resolutions, or, rather, the consideration of this subject, is one of the greatest importance, of greater importance than any single subject with which we have had to deal during the present session. I think we must all have been greatly gratified with the speech of the Premier-I was myself; and I think it is a most fortunate thing for the colony at the present time that the honourable gentleman is enabled to take so wide a view of the necessities and requirements of our position. Now, the great question for our consideration is this-in the words of the honourable gentleman who has just sat down: Are we to be a nation? The honourable gentleman exhorts us "to be a nation; to preserve our freedom." That, no doubt, is what we are bound to do. And then comes the question, How are we to do it? I confess that I was unable to follow the honourable gentleman who has just sat down. I could follow the Premier as far as he went, although I should have been very glad if he could have gone a little bit further. It seems to me that we want to put distinctly before our minds what it is we desire to accomplish. That is necessary, before we can proceed to determine the means by which we hope to arrive at the end we desire. Now, what I wish to see accomplished is this: I want to see the bond of union between the colonies and the Mother-country drawn closer and nearer. I want to see law and order, as we understand it, established in the islands of the South Seas; and I want New Zealand to have a voice in determining the policy which, in future, is to rule in these seas. Sir, that is the object I have set before myself to accomplish. I believe that we can be a nation in no other way than by association with our fellows, by a closer union with Australia and England. I altogether deny that it is possible for us, in the present age, to be a nation of New Zealanders—I cannot believe it for a moment; and I think, if any honourable gentleman will

look at what is going on all around him in the world, he will see that the thing is an absolute impossibility. The honourable member for Auckland East very eloquently told us what was the position of England, and how she small territory opposite a large continent—had grown to greatness. He told us that she possessed but a small army, but that, of course, she possessed also, with that small army, a large navy, which answered the purpose of conti-nental large armies. But he entirely forgot this: that when England grew to greatness it was by the growth of her population in comparison with the population with which she was perpetually at war. That is how she grew to greatness. She grew to greatness with her population. Why did Holland disappear as a great Power? Holland at one time was able to drive our fleets from the seas, and followed our own celebrated seamen into our rivers and ports. She led the way in the commerce of the world. She was the greatest maritime Power in the world at one time. Why did she fall? Simply and solely because she had not the population to retain the great power she had acquired. So it must be with us. If a nation has not got sufficient population to carry on the work of a nation, that nation must sink. Now, I ask honourable members to look around us at what all the nations are doing in our own time. Italy has federated or joined together, or amalgamated—whatever you like to call it. Germany has done the same; and then comes one of the most remarkable things the world has ever seen: The American people, speaking our own language, have given one million lives and untold treasure in order to maintain their unity. Now, I say, with these facts before us, is it not evident that it must be our business also to maintain the unity of the Empire? And I venture to think, notwithstanding the speech of the honourable member for Auckland East, that, if we are to make a great nation, the great nation we must make is to claim the duties and accept the responsibilities of citizens of a great empire—the Empire of England or the British Empire. It is only by that that we can preserve our freedom and be a nation. To grow into a separate nation, as some honourable gentlemen have told us we should, is simply an impossibility. It is an absolute impossibility that we should ever grow into a separate nation. Let honourable gentlemen consider what will be the population of America fifty years hence: it will be far over one hundred millions of English-speaking people. And what is it possible for us to be in that time? And then look at other nations, also growing enormously in population and power. ever may be our ability, whatever may be our courage, whatever may be our resources, it is impossible that a small country like this can ever attain the position which England attained when she had but small populations to contend with. Then, I accept it as a fact that, if we are to preserve our liberties, it will not be by isolation, but by confederation in some form or other. Then comes the question, What is to be the form of confederation? How

can we claim the privileges of Englishmen, and fulfil the true duties of citizenship? Now, I am as anxious for the confederation of the British Empire as anybody can possibly be, and there was a time, I confess, when I thought that end would be better attained by the various colonies remaining separate, rather than confederating with each other in the first place. But I confess, after many years of careful consideration of this subject, I have come to the conclusion that the only possible way in which we can induce the English Government, Parliament, and people to look at this question—which is of vital importance, I believe, to our nation—is to become sufficiently powerful for them to listen Why did the Conference meet in Sydney? It met simply because the British Government told each individual colony it could not communicate separately with each on these matters of what may be termed Imperial policy in these seas, and that, if we desired the British Government to carry out what we wished in these seas, we must not speak as individual colonies, but some responsible body must be constituted to speak in the name of the whole of the colonies in these seas. And I say, that being so, we, the Australasian Colonies, had to consider how we could best get ourselves into a position to speak, as a whole, with authority to the Home Government, and yet not give up the individual rights of each colony within its own borders. That seems to me to be the problem for solution at the present time. I agree entirely with those gentlemen who think that an Australasian confederation like the Canadian confederation is an impossibility. not a single representative at the Sydney Conference but held that view clearly and distinctly; and what they desired was to set up a Council which, without any power of interference with the separate colonies in their internal arrangements and legislation, should speak in the name of the whole of the colonies in regard to what I may call Imperial policy in these seas. Now, when I say that I want to see law and order, as we understand it, established in the islands of the Pacific-that is to say, our form of civilization-I wish it to be understood as considering it of the greatest importance that the population of the various islands should be preserved. There can be no doubt that, with the present labour traffic, as it is called, going on, many of the islands are becoming fast depopulated; and the idea is gaining ground to a very great extent among these islanders that the whole object of white people is simply to make a profit, even at the cost of the lives and comfort of the natives of those islands. And I look upon it as a matter of very great importance—as a duty we owe to those islanders, and to ourselves and our children—that we should obtain a voice in determining how that traffic should be carried on. And I venture to think that, if we do not demand our rights, and express our willingness to bear our fair share of the burdens, in that respect—if we do not demand that we should have a voice in this matter, to settle this

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policy—then we are committing a very gravepolitical and moral mistake. Coloured labour can never be a possibility in New Zealand, and therefore I say it becomes a duty on our part to demand a voice in the regulation of that labour traffic. Nor can it ever be a question with the largest part of habitable Australia. I do not hold at all with the honourable member for Auckland East that there is a danger of the coloured population overriding the white population, or of the white population bringing the coloured population intoslavery on the Australian Continent. say, if there is a fear that our fellow-men, our brothers born of the same flesh and blood, as the colonists of Australia are, are about to enslave a coloured race in any part of Australia, that we should combine with the rest of Australia in putting a stop to such a traffic as that, and I say that to me that would be an additional reason why we should demand a voice in this matter. Now, the honourable gentleman says "But suppose you federate, and suppose that England was then in some difficulty, and that you were desirous of helping her, and that that was what the rest of Australia was not disposed to do, that you were outvoted, and therefore you were not able to render to your Mothercountry that assistance you were anxious to give." But I want to know why we are to suppose that our brothers in Australia are not going to have as great a desire to help the Mother-country as we. Sir, the honourable gentleman has given us a glowing picture of what this race invariably does wherever itsettles: that it ennobles, educates, and refines. I say we have a right to suppose they will do their duty as well as we shall, and I do not doubt it; but, if we alone are possessed of these virtues, is not that a reason why we should go into the world and show them, and endeavour to disseminate them? Are we to shut ourselves up-in a glass case, as it were, because our virtue is not sufficient to rub shoulders with other parts of the world? I will put it in this way: that very possibly, by our assistance, even if a certain number of colonies were not prepared to do their duty, we might turn the scale, and so render the assistance which I and the honourable gentleman would desire to see rendered. Then we come to the question of what this federation is; and I need not repeat what the Premier has so ably put, but I would point out to him that he appeared to me rather to overlook the meaning of subsection (h) in that Bill. He will see at the end of the clause, and also at the beginning, that the Federal Coun-cil may not legislate for any colony upon any of these subjects unless that colony first asks it to do so: that is to say, we must first relegate these subjects under clause (h) to the Council. The whole power proposed to be given in the draft Federal Bill is, as the honourable gentleman says, a power that we do not yet possess in the Australian Colonies; but there is no power of internal interference with any colony unless the Legislature of the colony first places under the central body the power of legislation upon these subjects. Every mem-



ber of the Sydney Conference desired this: every one of the delegates was most anxious that there should be no interference with the internal legislative powers of any of the colonies. I look forward, indeed, to the time when we shall have a much closer bond; but the time is not yet, and we shall make a fatal mistake if we endeavour to hurry that time. I look forward with some hope of seeing a common Customs tariff, and unity in many other matters of equal importance; but of course at the present time the thing is simply impossible, because, in my opinion, we can never have our Customs tariffs the same until we also have a general guarantee of the various debts; and I go so far as to hope that I may even live to see that time, Sir, when we shall not only have a universal Customs law, but shall also have a universal guarantee of each other's public debts.

Mr. MACANDREW.—One purse?
Major ATKINSON.—Well, one purse, no doubt, in one respect—for the general defence of the Empire and other Imperial matters. I should like to impress upon honourable members this, with regard to the draft Federal Bill—and I hope they will look carefully over it themselves, and they will then see that there is no power of internal interference except at the request of the colony.

Mr. W. D. STEWART.—How can you get rid of a law when it has once been adopted?

Major ATKINSON.—Only by the Federal Council - that is quite clear; but that is another matter. Of course, in asking the Council to legislate, we might preserve our power if we chose. But these are matters of detail. All I want to say is that the proposal does not in any way bind the colony, unless it asks to be bound. Now I come to this question: The honourable member for Auckland East says, "Stand apart. If this power is given to federated Australia, it must be given to you." But can anybody believe it for a moment? Can anybody believe that the power delegated to three millions and a half of people, with over twenty millions of revenue, will be delegated to half a million of people with a revenue of three millions? Sir, our whole difficulty is our insignificance and yet our importance. We are not sufficiently insignificant to be let alone; we are a reat prize; there are no doubt many nations that desire to possess us: we are, as I say, in that unfortunate position that we are not large enough to impress ourselves upon the Imperial Government, and yet we are of sufficient importance to be the object of envy of other nations. Even now, how are we to obtain a voice in any matter? Can we obtain it? Has the honourable gentleman ever been listened to when he made representations? Sir, he began in 1846; and how was he treated?—even though he was an Imperial officer, one who might have been supposed to represent the Imperial interests, and who, speaking solely in the interests of the Empire, would have been listened to and attention paid to his representations; but was it so? And, subsequently, when he was Premier, did not the

same representations go Home, have they not gone Home time after time, without any result? And then, after this, when this great question of the transportation of the worst French criminals came up for consideration, what was the action of the Imperial Government? How far did they listen to the separate colonies? We know that we could not get them to move at all, with any representations that we were able to make. Then, Sir, look at the action of France. Since 1884 she has laid herself out deliberately to obtain possession of the whole of the islands between Australia and New Zealand and the Isthmus of Panama; and, although arrangements were made between the Imperial Governments of England and France, although it was distinctly understood that the French flag was not to be hoisted over any except certain named islands, we now know, as a fact, that the whole of the islands, extending as far south as Easter Island, are claimed by France, and her flag is now floating over them; and, when our Agent-General made representations to that effect, the reply was, simply, "We have not acknowledged it." But what is the use of not acknowledging it, if the French flag is still flying, and if it is to be permitted to fly, there? Then, let us follow this line of argument out a little further and ask, What are the French there for? Are they there for the purpose of colonization? Do they colonize anywhere? Have they a single colony that is self-supporting and that is not largely aided from the Treasury of France? If they have one, at any rate I do not know of it. I know of a large number of French colonies, all of which are a very considerable expense to the mother-country. What I want to point out is that the Republican Treasury of France has to maintain these colonies, and all of them at a very large expenditure. Very well, then, we come to the question that I have just asked: Why is France extending her dominions in these seas? What can be her object? It is not settlement, for, as the Premier has said truly, if the French came here as we came out, to subdue the wilderness and to conquer it, we should receive them, I believe, with friendly greetings. However, that is not their object; and if France has no idea of colonization, but is only making dominions here so as to pour out her worst criminals upon these seas—if that is her object, then, I ask, what is in store for our children if this is allowed to go Look at the armaments that France has in these seas at the present time; and are we to suppose that we can escape much longer maintaining fleets to watch those fleets? The Imperial Government, before they increased the Australian fleet — before they made this an Admiral's station—were spending, merely upon the maintenance of seamen and ships, £150,000 a year for the small fleet they were keeping in these seas. We know that, man for man, we are infinitely better able to pay our fair share towards that expense than the tax-payers of England are. Then, the people of England, the taxpayers of England, are beginning to ask the question, and to ask it rightly,

"Why should we only be taxed to protect these people?" And, Sir, what does that mean? It means that, if we are not part and parcel of the British Empire as much as Kent is, we shall soon be told that if we want ships for defence we must contribute our full share of the cost or go without. And it means some-thing further: it means that the people of England will soon say to us, "Either you be-long to us or you do not belong to us. If you claim citizenship, then fulfil the duties of citizenship; and one of its duties is, clearly, to contribute fairly towards the expense of maintaining the honour of the Empire all over the world." And then, if we are to pay, as I believe we must and shall have to pay, we have got to consider how we can get a fair voice in the control. Here, again, comes this question of federation. The New Zealand delegates found, when they got to Australia, that the idea of the delegates at first was simply to see to New Guinea and the New Hebrides: they thought a great deal of the New Hebrides and of New Guinea: but, of course, we said at once, "We can have nothing to do with the New Hebrides and with New Guinea, unless you deal with the whole of the islands within these seas. We are quite prepared, as part of the British Empire, to say that the annexation of New Guinea is a matter of first-rate importance to the British Empire. But, then, if that is so, we must look at the whole position of the British Empire within these seas." Of course that only had to be put, to be immediately recognized. I did not quite understand the Premier in the same way that the honourable member for Auckland East did. I did not understand him to say that we had very little interest in New Guinea. I think he said "very little practical interest," and I understood him to take the same view that I do-that we have an Imperial interest in New Guinea; and I say we have a great Imperial interest in it. It is an important position to guard one of our ways to the rest of the world, and it is only of interest to us, then, if we are part of a great nation. If we are to become a nation by ourselves, and isolate ourselves from the rest of the colonies, it is quite impossible for us to talk of having posts in New Guinea, on the road to Panama, or anywhere else. We must be content with small things, if we are to be small. Now, I ask, supposing we do not federate, what is going to happen? — that is to say, supposing we are not prepared to say to our fellow-colonists in Australia, "Yes, we are prepared to join with you in the constitution of some Board which can represent jointly our feelings to the Imperial Government upon all matters outside our borders. We will retain the right of communicating with them on all matters of internal policy; but we want somebody who can speak in our united names as to the policy we desire outside." But, before going into that question, let me observe this: that almost all these movements which have -originated the amalgamation of the race, as it were, have come from outside. Look at the good that has been done in Ireland. Practi-

cally, the legislation which the English Parliament has been passing of late years has been brought about to a large extent by outside pressure from America. That is to say, the Irishmen who have gone abroad have, in my opinion, been the moving power. So it has been with Scotland also; and so, it seems to me, it must be in regard to federation of the Empire: we shall never get federation of the Empire except by pressure from outside. The pressure must come from the colonies, and not internally from the Home Government. I have come to that conclusion with very great regret; but I have come to it; and I think, if honourable gentle-men will look, they will see that the British Parliament is so taken up with detail, and the British Government have got into such a groove, that it is impossible for them to turn their attention to welding together the British Empire. I feel very great regret upon this point, but it seems to me to be so. And then, following out that line of thought, if we establish on this side of the world a strong Federal Council, without interfering with the internal affairs of the colonies, and can speak to the British Government on matters affecting the colonies, and if we have, as we know we have in Canada, a strong Federal Government, we shall be in a position shortly to speak to the British people with such power and in such a way that they could not possibly misunderstand the necessity of drawing closer the bonds which unite us. I fear myself it will be impossible for us to remain in the position in which we are now. I do not believe it is possible that the bond which is keeping us together at the present time will bear any great strain. It will have to be drawn closer, or be very much slackened. Now, I am very strongly of the opinion that the happiness of a great part of the human race depends upon the federation of the British people. Therefore I say let us take any step, even at a sacrifice, which will help to bring us nearer to the British Empire. We are told, "Look at the distance. The thing is impossible." I ask honourable gentlemen to look at the state of Scotland a hundred years ago. How much nearer was it to London than we are now? Why, it is less than a hundred years ago that a peer got up in his place in the House of and and said, "If any noble Lord should announce to your Lordships that a person could get from London to Edinburgh in a fortnight, he could be only fit to be sent to Bedlam." We peer got up in his place in the House of Lords would be only fit to be sent to Bedlam." know also that, when the United States took possession of the Western States, it took the delegates from three to six weeks to get round to Washington. So that the question of distance, to my mind, is nothing. I believe there is no difficulty that cannot be overcome; but I say whatever difficulty there is has got to be overcome, because, if ever we are to be that power in the world which we ought to be, and if we are to preserve happiness to the English-speaking races, it will be by federation; and by federation only can we hope to retain our position in the world. And now let us look at what will happen if we do not federate. It is clear that the Australian Colonies will go on with

There is no doubt that there is great jealousy between those colonies. I was very much struck with it when I was there, and I submit that their interests are no more identical than are ours with theirs; and therefore there would be no fear of the Australian Colonies banding together to outvote us, as some honourable gentlemen appear to think. But, suppose the Bill is passed by the Imperial Parliament, and we decline to take advantage of it and remain outside—that, no doubt, is in our power—what will happen? First, take the instance of a war breaking out. The fleet, of course, will have its head-quarters in Sydney, and there will be a Federal Council in Australia which will be able to speak with authority to the Home Government in the name of united Australia. We can write despatches, as the honourable member for Auckland East did, alike when he was Governor of a Crown colony, and as Governor of a constitutional colony, and as Prime Minister of a colony with responsible Government; but do you think for a moment that our despatches will be considered as against the despatches of the Federal Council in Australia? Do you think that our wants will be attended to, so long as there are wants in Australia which require to be looked after? No, Sir, it is impossible; and it is quite certain that the whole of the defensive powers in these seas will be at the disposal of Australia. Of course that would be only right, unless we are prepared to pay such an enormous sum as it is impossible for us to pay. And, then — what to my mind is of greater importance — what about the Pacific Islands? Have we no duty towards those islands? Do we not desire to have a voice in the policy that is to govern them? I say we do. Then, I ask, how are we to obtain it? Some honourable members think that under the Annexation and Confederation Act we passed the session before last we should get the power. Some say, "Let us adopt a po-licy of annexation, and take possession of these islands." The honourable member for Auckland East says that the power which is given to Australia will be given to us; but I say that the giving of such a power to three millions of people with conflicting interests is not the same as giving it to a small population of half a million of people.

Mr. MACANDREW.—We shall be three

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millions before long.

Major ATKINSON.—I hope we shall live to see that time; but I ask, by the time we are three millions of people, how many millions will there be in Australia? The whole of this question will be settled long before we arrive at that stage, and we shall be too late. The Australian Colonies are very anxious that we should join them now, because they say, in a truly imperial spirit, that we should unite to be a great nation. But, if we choose to stand aloof, will they stand still? Will they not fulfil what they consider their destinies and duty? course they will, and they are looking forward to the duty of determining what is to be the policy of the Imperial Government in these seas with

regard to the islands, which may be a source of the greatest blessing or the greatest curse to this part of the world. If we are going to lose this opportunity, and are going to be isolated, let us understand what that means. Do not let us be misled into the belief that that power will be given to us under the Annexation Act or by any other Act. We are going to abandon our duty to the islanders in these seas. We know the bulk of the trade goes to the Australian Colonies, and they are not going to lose that trade if we say we do not care to have a voice in the matter. No doubt the effect of non-federation means this: that either we shall have to expend enormous sums in self-defence, or we shall have to make large contributions to the Imperial Government, and run the risk of being served after the Australian Colonies have been served. And that would be quite right. But, if we are so important a country as we consider we are, and if we are to develop into a great nation, and to have a voice in the policy of these seas, we must be prepared to do our duty. sure as that I stand here that, if we fail to join the Australian Colonies, they will simply proceed to do the work themselves; and we shall have no voice in it whatever. I venture to say that, when the people of New Zealand come to understand that not joining in federation means having no voice in the policy that rules these seas, there will be great disappointment. throughout the land, and great indignation It behoves those honourable gentlemen who tell us we should paddle our own canoe to show us how we are to paddle it in the direction I have been pointing out. No doubt one great evil that is about to visit these seas, should the determination of the French Government be carried out, will to a great extent be got over if the Australasian Colonies make up their minds to federate; but their voice will be weakened in a proportionate extent if we determine to separate from them. No doubt their representations will have a strong effect; but I say that, as one man, the European population of these colonies should rise against permitting French criminals to be poured out on any of the islands of these seas. And those honourable members who have followed this question will see that it is one of very urgent importance; for-I do not know whether the honourable gentleman knows it, but—it is a fact that the French Government not only propose to send out men, but to send out women to marry these men, and that the marriageable women who have committed offences are pardoned if they come out to marry the convicts in these seas. If there is any truth in the doctrine of descent, I ask honourable gentlemen just to consider what that means. Plainly, it means bringing into the world in these seas a thoroughly debased population; and, to my mind, there is no question but that one of the ideas was to overrun the New Hebrides with these convicts by means of French companies, and shortly them to say that, as it has been peopled practi-cally by Frenchmen, France must take possession of it. I am sorry to have troubled the House at such length; but the subject, to my mind, is, as I have said, one of the very greatest importance, and I want to impress upon the House, as far as I am able, the necessity for immediate action. I believe that now is our I believe that, if we lose this opportunity. opportunity, the work will proceed without us, without our having a voice in the matter; and I do beg of the House to agree to the establishment of some power, some Council, which, upon Imperial matters relating to the islands in these seas, can speak in the united names of these colonies. That is what I desire to see. Can any one doubt that it is our race that will be ultimately dominant in these seas? can any one doubt that, if we do not now lay the lines of that power, the cost, both in blood and treasure, will be enormously greater in years to come? As I said before, other Powers are getting a hold upon these seas. They are not getting it with a view to settlement, but with ulterior views; and, if a nation like France obtains possession with a view of deporting all her worst criminals here, it will be impossible for us to escape enormous expenditure in the future in keeping a fleet and armies to watch the fleets and armies which she keeps. She might at any time abandon the whole of her possessions here, and it would be no loss to her empire. She must maintain a fleet for European purposes, and she can leave, if she choose, if pressed at any time, the whole of these possessions for any other purpose; and yet we must maintain a fleet to watch her fleet. I hope that any honourable gentlemen who think differently will show us how it is possible for us to move the Imperial Government to watch these matters, except by some body which can speak in the name of the united colonies. That is the difficulty which I have. If I believed we could promote Imperial federation by separate representations, then I should be strongly in favour of remaining as we are; but I say that, if any honourable gentleman will read the correspondence with the Home Government, if he will read Lord Derby's despatches, he will see that it is impossible to move them in any direction by the motion of any separate colony. And the whole history of the world at the present time tells us that we are powerless without combination. That is the history of all the powerful peoples of the world at the present moment; and if we are—as I fear we must, for some time to maintain fleets and armies in these seas until our power is dominant, then I say that can only be done by union with the Imperial power, and union among ourselves; and I do hope, Sir, that this House will now seize the opportunity of agreeing to resolutions which will show that, while we desire to maintain our full authority within our own borders, we are prepared to unite with the Australian Colonies in a matter of what I call Imperial policy. And, with regard to the matter of expense.

The confess I think very little about it. I look I confess I think very little about it. upon this after-claim of the Imperial Government with the deepest regret: not because of

the £15,000—I do not care about that at all but it shows me that they have not in any way grasped the position. Pressure was put by the Australian Colonies upon the Imperial Government to annex New Guinea and assume a reasonable control over the labour traffic; and apparently the question was asked by some one in authority, "What will it cost?" "Oh, I dare say," replied some official, not knowing much about the question, "about £10,000 or £15,000 will do it." Without any calculation, as it seems, £10,000 was first proposed; then £15,000. The Imperial Government asked for £15,000 annually, and the colonies jointly were prepared to pay that sum; but when the Imperial authorities considered the matter further they doubled their demand, asking £30,000 annually instead of £15,000, and said, "If you are not prepared to pay the £30,000 now asked, Major-General Scratchley must do the best he can on £15,000." That shows me to a still greater extent the urgency of getting a power which can speak in the name of the colonies. If the Imperial Government are to still maintain the power which I hope they will, then, I say, they must understand what is necessary to be done in these seas. And it seems to me hopeless to get them to understand the position, without some such authority which shall watch our interests, which are the Imperial interests; and I say this little instance—this extra demand - shows that the question was never thought out or considered as it ought to be considered, being a matter of Imperial interest. I think we can very fairly say, "You asked us for £15,000, and we have given it to you: you must be content at present. If, presently, you demand more, we are prepared to give it, if it is due by us." But I venture to think the Imperial Government itself have duties in this matter. Whatever may be their position in this matter, I trust that the colonies here will find whatever money will be necessary to carry out an effective control—and that immediately - of the labour traffic in these seas; and therefore I should be quite pre-pared to support, if necessary, the demand for 230,000 a year—even more, if it is shown to be necessary. But I think we ought to point out to the Home Government, at the same time, that they also have a duty, and they ought really to carefully examine the matter, and let us understand more definitely than we do what they propose to do with the money. Another great advantage I see in paying the money is this: that, as soon as we contribute for this purpose, it will not be long before we are asked to contribute something towards the Imperial navy. I feel satisfied that that is coming. We shall be asked to contribute towards the cost of the Imperial navy in these seas; and, whenever that comes, I shall support it with great delight, because I look upon it as another step in the direction of Imperial federation. This is quite certain: that no English-speaking community will ever consent to pay money for any length of time without having some control as to the way in which it is spent; and therefore I am quite

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ready — as I believe the pressure has got to come from us — to begin by paying, in order that presently we may have a voice in the expenditure; and I hope that this House will, as the Premier has so eloquently put it, see its way to agree cordially in the proposition of the Premier as submitted to us; except, Sir, that I should like to see the honourable gentleman strike out—as he told us he is willing to do, or does not care much about it—subsection (e), and I should like to see him amend subsection (g) to this effect. If he strikes out (e), he will see that this is almost a consequential amendment. I should like (g) to read thus:—

"This House is of opinion that further negotiations should take place between the Australasian Colonies with regard to federation; and that the further consideration of the question be postponed until next session of Parlia-

ment."

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I hope the honourable gentleman will see his way to accepting this amendment. If he does, it will show that the House will be prepared to carry out the views of the Conference. And it does this: It enables them to establish a body which can speak in the name of the united colonies, instructed by each Parliament, and yet without any power at all to interfere with the internal legislation of any one of the colonies. I thank the House for the attention it has been pleased to give me, and I do trust that honourable members will see their way to carry the resolutions, with this slight amendment; and I believe then we shall have done a great work, not only for the present, but for our children and our children's children.

Sir J. VOGEL.—It seems to me very clear from the speeches which have been made that the Government occupies a singular position in the controversy. It is clear that the honourable member for Egmont goes all the way with those who take the view that the Victorian Government does with regard to the proceedings of the Convention. And it is clear that the honourable member for Auckland East is of opinion that we should be running great danger, by allowing ourselves to federate with the Australian Colonies, of impairing the prospects of federation with the Empire. Now, a very great deal that has fallen from the honourable member for Egmont finds entire echo in my mind, and I was glad to see that the honourable member dealt, if he will permit me to say so, with the question in so practical a fashion, and did not import into it, as one would naturally feel inclined to do, sentiment. What we have to consider is not sentiment, but what is for the benefit of all the colonies. It is a important decision we have to arrive at. It is a very is an exceedingly anomalous thing that this matter, fraught with so much importance to the colony in its future, should come on this evening after the passing of the Appropriation Bill. Were it really the case that our decision this night would settle the question of federation, we should hold in our hands an enormous responsibility. The action taken by New South Wales since the Convention relieves this colony of anything like the importance that it would

hold in the matter, since, whether we decide one way or the other, still a great deal of doubt will remain as to how far it would be possible to carry out the views of the Australian Convention. To put the matter in a practical point of view, we have to consider the question of the annexation of New Guinea, and of our contribution towards the cost of governing New Guinea, the question of the establishment of convict settlements in the Pacific, and lastly the question as to the extent to which we are willing to bind ourselves to join with the Australian Colonies in a federal union of a more or less intimate extent. As to the initiation of the question, we know that it arose out of the annexation by Queensland of New Guinea, with the view of forcing the hand of the Imperial Government. We know also -and the honourable member who spoke last brought it out very well when he spoke of the necessity of exercising outside pressure—we know that we cannot get the Imperial Government to move in these matters without bringing outside pressure to bear. What we have seen going on during the last twelve months is similar to what was going on at the time when outside pressure forced the Imperial Government to the annexation of Fiji. Without that outside pressure Fiji would not have been annexed. Without that outside pressure New Guinea would not be annexed. The honourable member for Egmont desires such an intimate federation as will always give us an easy means of bringing an agitation to bear upon the Imperial Government. While the Convention in Sydney favoured the annexation of New Guinea, they were exceedingly hostile to an increased convict settlement in these seas. They were favourable to a contribution to the cost of providing for a Protectorate over New Guinea, and to a certain extent they approved federation. A Protectorate has been already assumed over New Guinea, but that it is of a very unsatisfactory nature honourable members may gather from the discontent expressed by the Agents-General, and from the fact that Lord Carnarvon, who has certainly the well-being of the colonies at heart, has called attention to its very partial nature. The English Government propose to depart from the usual plan of a Crown colony, by suggesting to the other colonies that, if they will double their contributions, it will allow them to have a Board of Advice to assist the High Commissioner. To my mind, this would be of very little importance, because I am convinced that, if New Guinea is governed with ordinary prudence, and if we assume such an amount of authority over it as we should do, it will become a self-supporting colony, and the amount of contribution we make will only be for two or three years. The same thing was attempted when Fiji was annexed. The colonies were asked if they would contribute. They declined to do so, because they had not been consulted. If they had been consulted, and had contributed, their contributions would not have lasted beyond some eighteen or twenty months, for the colony soon became self-supporting. There

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is every likelihood that such will be the case with New Guinea. Then, with regard to the convict question, there is absolute unanimity of opinion throughout the whole of the Australasian Colonies that it would be disastrous to them all to see an extension of the convict system to any part of the Pacific. As to the way in which they expressed their horror and abhorrence of the thing, that may be a question upon which some difference of opinion may be entertained, but that they all felt to the largest possible extent that horror and abhorrence there is no doubt. Whatever difference of opinion there may exist as to the mode of action, there is entire unanimity of opinion as to the object we all aspire to attain—to put a stop to the convict system within these seas. Now, Sir, we come to the question of federation. It is a singular thing that one of the resolutions passed in Sydney, although not recapitulated in the final resolutions, declared that federation was premature. The honourable member for Egmont, who asked us to leave out a similar subsection of our resolutions, was a party to the passing of a resolution at the Convention, which said,

"That this Convention, recognizing that the time has not yet arrived at which a complete federal union of the Australasian Colonies can be attained, but considering that there are many matters of general interest with respect to which united action would be advantageous, adopts the accompanying draft Bill," &c.

The Convention arrived at the conclusion that federation was premature, and yet they proposed a measure to lead up to federation. It seems to me that the Convention arrived at that conclusion on much the same principle that guides the omnibus-conductor to take any number of passengers, in the assurance that when he shuts the door they will settle down. The Convention seemed to think that it was

premature to go into federation.

Major ATKINSON.—I am afraid the honourable gentleman did not hear me distinctly. I said that every member of that Convention was opposed to such a confederation as Canada had — that is, a complete federation. they desired was simply a federation which would enable the colonies to approach the Imperial Government upon questions of material policy which they desired to see put in force in the South Seas. There is no contradiction between the Act adopted by the Convention

and the opinions expressed.

Sir J. VOGEL.—The opinion of the Convention is here on record. The Convention, finding that federation was outside any practical policy at the time, endcavoured to adopt an alternative, which they thought would lead up to federation. The honourable member has eloquently and powerfully expressed his high aspirations as to the results that were to follow from this measure. I think they began at the wrong end with this Federal Council Bill. It seems to me that federation should commence with an assimilation of the material interests of the various colonies concerned, and a consideration of whether those interests can be sufficiently

assimilated to make the foundation of a bond of union. Afterwards the question of legislative machinery would arise. The Convention have, in this case, taken exactly the opposite course. They have provided a legislative machinery ingeniously devised, and overlooked the fact that, if there be not that material agreement between the colonies on matters of importance, if such an alliance be made, and supposing the Council be carried on on the lines proposed, the colonies will be on much worse terms than hitherto, and, instead of promoting the federation of the colonies, we should do more to set them at variance with each other. We know that the relations of the peoples of New South Wales and Victoria have often been in a high state of tension; but never before have they reached such a degree of tension as at the present time. What is the danger in regard to the Federal Bill as it What is now stands? On the one hand, there is the avowed intention of some of its supporters to bring into intimate federation the various colonies; while, on the other hand, we have the equally-palpable danger that the colonies not desiring such an intimate federation will be throwing themselves into the opposite scale, and there will be, from the very in-ception, a constant struggle between the separate colonies and the Federal Council. That Federal Council cannot be in harmony with the various colonies. In the first instance, the Council will only meet once in two years, and it may work by Committees; and yet to this body, which is only to meet once in two years, and which may work by Committees, we are asked to abandon all our rights of representation to the Mother-country -- to leave to that body, worked in that spasmodic and intermittent manner, the whole weight and responsibility of making such representations from time to time as may be required. Sir, the odds are somewhat against the Council being in session just at the time when communications require to be made. We are, therefore, placed in this position: Either there will be, what there is now, an interchange of opinion between the various Governments, with the view to united action; or the several colonies will be bound by the action of Committees appointed under this Act, which Committees would have at their control, so to speak, the destinies of the several colonies. Then, the nature of the representation of this Council absolutely forbids the placing substantial power in its hands. It is not in accordance with the genius of our representative system, nor indeed with that of any of the other colonies, that there should be a representation so wholly distinct from the question of population. In this Council it is proposed that each of the constitutional colonies shall have two members, and each Crown colony one member, without any reference to population. It may therefore follow, with the greatest possible ease, that one or two powerful colonies, with the Crown colonies possessing exceedingly small populations, may override the wishes of by far the largest majority of the population within the proposed federation.

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Now, that is entirely opposed to our system—entirely opposed to our ideas—of representation; and it is equally opposed—if it was well understood in Australia—to any representative system within constitutional colonies. I have made a calculation, and I find that Victoria, Tasmania, Western Australia, and Fiji could very nearly override all the rest of the colonies-New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland, and New Zealand. Now, to risk a possibility of that kind would be absurd, taking into consideration the fact that all the colonies have always voted for representation founded on a population basis. With regard to representations to the Colonial Office, I am not sure that I agree with the honourable member who leads us to think that the united representation of one dominion will have more power than the several representations of separate colonies. I am not sure that he is right in that matter. But I am sure of this: that, until there is a substantial agreement upon the material questions which shall guide and be the basis of federation, no one colony that I know of is in a position to abandon its present right of direct representation to and intercourse with the Mother-country. We know what the Dominion of Canada is. There is but one point of communication between Downing Street and Canada: that point is the head of the Dominion Government. We know that, as the Federal Council Bill is now framed, a like result is held out—that there will be one source only of representation to the Mothercountry; and that the harmonizing of the interests of the different colonies will create the condition precedent to the federation of the Australian Dominion. It is utterly impossible for New Zealand to abandon its rights of independent representation to the Mother-country.

Major ATKINSON.—It is not proposed. Sir J. VOGEL.—Let me say this: We can-not accept that portion of the Bill which al-lows of joint representation on behalf of the colonies as a whole to the Mother-country as a substitute for the separate representation the different colonies now enjoy. The honourable member for Egmont, whilst expressing extreme views on the subject of the Convention, chose to consider that on this point he was in harmony with the opinions expressed by the Premier. I was absent at the time the Premier spoke, but it seems to me, as far as I know the opinions of the Premier and the Government, that that is not the view of the Premier or the Government. What we think is that the Federal Council ought to be nothing more than a legalized form of colonial Convention, and not a Federal Council in the sense that it should have the right to speak on behalf of the colonies as a united body. And, Sir, equally, I think, the honourable member is mistaken as to the effect of subsection (8) of clause 15 of the Federal Council Bill. He says that under that clause no legislation can be passed affecting particular colonies unless a desire for such legislation has first been expressed by the colonies interested. But I do not think he stated the whole effect of that clause. It is true that a matter cannot be

dealt with unless it shall have been referred to the Convention by colonies interested; but I take it that, if the colonies once refer a matter to the Convention, it is then beyond their power to control the legislation of the Convention on that subject. If they send a draft Bill to the Convention, it may be amended in accordance with the views of the majority of the Convention; and those amendments might be of a character that would not at all suit the colonies interested. We know that the alteration of a single word in a Bill sometimes changes the whole character of the Bill. We see that in every-day experience. We are constantly referring matters to Select Committees for inquiry and report, but we always review the decisions of those Committees, and it has never been contended, so far as I know, that we should be bound by the opinions of Select Committees. Although colonies may refer a subject to the Federal Council, there is not the slightest guarantee that the legislation that will take place upon such reference will be in accordance with the wish of the colonies making the reference. I do not think that there is that consonance between the views of the honourable member for Egmont and those of the Government on that point which the honourable mem-ber claims. We say that, before any law passed by the Council should come into operation in a colony, that colony should have an opportunity of saying whether it is prepared to accept that law. As the honourable member has only expressed a desire to excise that portion of our resolutions which forbids direct representation by the proposed Council to the Imperial Government, I presume he is willing to accept that part which says that no law passed by the Council shall have force until it has been accepted by the colony or colonies affected by it. There is another point which is worthy of consideration. We cannot blink our eyes to the fact that we are not yet in a position to deal with federation as a practical question; and there is this further fact: that New South Wales has virtually withdrawn from the position taken up at the Conference, inasmuch as, after very long delay, it has refused to pass any resolutions on the subject. We cannot but approve the ground which the honourable member for Egmont takes so wisely, that it is of importance to us to remain in friendly relations with the Australian Colonies as a whole; but we may have a difficulty in doing that if we espouse the extreme views of either of the two parties which now undoubtedly exist in Australia on the subject. It is clear there is a split in the camp of the Australian Colonies, and it would no more suit us to be on unfriendly terms with New South Wales than with Victoria. It is of importance to us that we should be on friendly terms with Australia as a whole; but we cannot be if we espouse too strongly either side of the question. If New South Wales decline to join, Queensland will not come in; and it would appear that these two colonies will take one view of the question, and Victoria and Tasmania the other, possibly with the adherence of South

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What South Australia would do is not quite clear to me. She is coterminous with Victoria on one side, and also coterminous with New South Wales in respect of a large amount of territory. There is not the same importance attachable to our decision this evening as might have been the case if all the Australias were agreed. New South Wales has arrived at a different conclusion from Victoria, and it is evident it will not suit New Zealand to throw herself into the arms of either side. Now, Sir, I want to say a few words as to whether federation is desirable. The Australian continent is made up of a few huge colonies, which have managed with wonderful skill, I think, to conduct their affairs in a manner which has been in consonance with the views of their peoples. They have adopted popular of their peoples. institutions, and have made substantial material progress. But it cannot be supposed, as the honourable member for Egmont seems to assume, that there is no possibility of the break-up of some of these large colonies into smaller divisions. It is in my opinion certain that the Northern Territory will not always continue to be governed from South Australia; and it is equally certain that the enormous Colony of Western Australia must, in the course of time, be broken up into two or more colonies. It is more than probable that the same will be the case with Queensland. I am far from arriving at the conclusion that, although these colonies seem to be well managed at present, vexatious conditions may not arise which would interfere with the progress of unity and federation; and, on the whole, it is far from clear to my mind that federation amongst themselves would be of material advantage to the colonies. And now I come to the resolution of the honourable member for Auckland East. I am sorry the honourable gentleman introduced America into his resolution. We cannot be unaware that the population of the United States must be included in English speaking peoples, for it speaks a sort of English at the present time, although its language is rapidly becoming less like ours. Still, you must include it in the English-speaking races; but I do not think we are called upon to go into the ques-tion of annexation with the United States, nor do I think it is desirable to do so. I am one of those who think we should help on as far as we can the federation of the British Empire. I do not yield to any one in warmth of desire for that, but I do not know that federation of the colonies would help it on. I am rather inclined to agree with the honourable member for Auckland East that federation of the colonies separately from the rest of the Empire would not promote the federation of the Empire, but, on the contrary, might be an obstacle in its way. I agree with the honourable member for Egmont, and think he took a far-sighted view, when he said he looked forward to the time when we should form part of a confederation of the Empire, and show ourselves to be in complete harmony with the Mother-country in Imperial matters by con-

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tributing towards the cost of the navy, which he is undoubtedly right in saying is not kept up on account of the Mother-country solely, but for the protection of her huge possessions all over the world. I, for one, was glad to hear the honourable member coming forward so boldly and saying that, when the time arrived for this colony to be asked for a contribution towards the support of the navy, he would be found supporting compliance with the request. I consider that a most important declaration, coming from a gentleman who has held and holds so powerful a position in a colony like The question of the contri-New Zealand. bution towards the cost of maintaining a Protectorate at New Guinea, as the honourable member has said, is of very little moment. We may pay for two or three years, when the colony will probably become self-supporting: but the larger question, of contributing to the cost of the Imperial navy, with the concomitant question of giving the colonies a share in the government of the Empire, is far more serious, and deserves the deepest thought and consideration. I think we must face this alternative: Either we must consent to meet a responsibility of the kind, or we must accept the conclusion that we are only a part of the Empire for such a period as may suit convenience, and that separation from the rest of the Empire is only a question of time. There must either be disintegration or complete union. I believe that federation of the Australian Colonies would mean a large weight thrown into the balance towards disintegration, and not in the direction of federation of the Empire. There were paramount reasons which made it necessary to establish a dominion in Canada, but these reasons do not exist in the case of Australia; and I feel certain that, if three or four of the Australian Colonies were created a dominion, like Canada, there would be very little chance of arrangements being made by which the whole Empire could be federated. I therefore feel that, if the honourable member for Auckland East had eliminated from his resolution the words "all English-speaking nations," and had substituted for them, in the first line, the words "British Empire," and had left out altogether the last line and a half, he would have represented the aspiration I have entertained for many years—the aspiration of seeing the British Empire federated into one harmonious whole. I shall not detain the House much longer; but I wish to say a few words about the position of France. I think it is imprudent for us to pass judgment upon the French system of colonization. That it is different from our system we must admit, and, as far as the convict element is concerned, we have a right to speak against it; but, as far as the rest is concerned, it is perhaps referable to the different temperament of the French people as compared with that of the English, and we cannot say that their system is not more suitable to their wants than ours would be. Be that as it may, we are content with the knowledge that the English are very capable colonists, who have shown their capabilities in various parts

of the world. Now, the honourable member for Egmont has asked us to consider what will be the consequences if we do not federate, and says that, if the Australian Colonies do not federate, they must cease to have much power with the Mother-country. Therein I wholly disagree with the honourable gentleman. I am quite convinced that, whether they federate or do not, the progress which the Australian Colonies and New Zealand are making is such that they must have a very large amount of power at head-quarters; and, in my opinion, they will have more power, in the long-run, by their individual representations than by their representations through, I was going to say, a bastard system of federation, but I will at any rate say a very immature and imperfect system of federation such as is now proposed. Now, our decision has to be made this night. The House has to decide between extreme views on the one side, which say, "Have nothing to do with federation," and extreme views on the other, which say, "Let us cast in our lot entirely with federation." The view of the Government is this: that it is of paramount importance to New Zealand to preserve the good terms which exist and have existed between it and the Australian Colonies, and therefore that New Zealand would do right to make a large amount of sacrifice in order to that end. It considers that we should do so if we have not to give up too much of our independence; and at any rate some of us think we should do so if we do not too much risk the federation of the Empire. So, it seems, we stand on common ground. We both wish federation of the Empire; but one thinks it is most promoted by federation of the colonies; the other says that would rather stand in the way of federation. We stand on neutral ground in saying, Let us meet the Australian Colonies as far as we can. And the extent to which we think we can meet them is this: We are ready to see that Federal Council established, but it must be established more in the nature of a legalized form of Convention of the various colonies than of an institution which would profess to speak in the name of a federated Australia which did not exist. We say, therefore, that its mission must be limited to making representations, not to the Mother-country, but to the colonies separately. That is the meaning of the subclause which the honourable gentleman says he wishes to have excised; and, further, we say-and the honourable member for Egmont meets us here — that no laws whatever passed by the Federal Council shall apply to any colony whatever until the Legislature of the colony affected has accepted the law after it has passed. If we carry these resolutions as they stand, the effect will be that, whilst we do not go all the way with Victoria in its views on the question, we somewhat meet the views of New South Wales; and, if the colonies are willing to give and take, and make compromises, it may be, upon the basis of the resolu-tions proposed by my colleague, that a common ground of union may be found. As to what extent it may be increased in after-years, that

does not matter. What we shall have done if we carry these resolutions, and if they find an echo in the opinions of other colonies, will be that those Conventions of the various colonies which have hitherto been held from time to time in New South Wales and Victoria will henceforth have a legalized form and machinery, and that they will meet not less than once in two years. We shall also have provided those Conventions with a means of passing laws which, when they have been accepted by the several colonies affected, will become laws applicable to the whole Australasian group. We shall also have provided the means by which the whole of the colonies may make authoritative united recommendations to the colonies singly; but we shall not have forfeited our independence or independent right of action. I do not believe that the establishment of this Federal Council will prevent the Imperial federation of the colonies concerned. I think that the extent to which my colleague has asked the House to go to-night is the only extent to which we are in prudence warranted in going. I have not heard the speech of my colleague; but I have had sufficient intercourse with him on the subject to know that there is no one more enthusiastic than he is as to what may ultimately take place; and the fact that he has inculcated this prudence in the commencement, and has impressed on the House the importance of not going too far, of not committing New Zealand to any greater extent than that of taking part in these legalized Conventions, should be satisfactory to honourable members. I take leave to think that the difference between the honourable members who have already spoken is not very great, and that, in the form of the resolutions as they are now presented to the House, we can find a common ground of acceptance. Then, I would say to the honourable member for Egmont that, whilst our aim with regard to supremacy in the Pacific is the same, that end may be attained with equal facility with a more moderate measure of federation than that proposed by the Convention in Sydney. The voice of Australasia should be held to be very loud and authoritative in questions relating to the South Pacific, and also the voice of New Zealand in questions relating to the islands which she more immediately can take under her charge. I cannot help thinking that there will be very little harmony between New Zealand and the other colonies if we are to suppose that those colonies would see, in a Federal Council, anything to prevent New Zealand, a constitutional colony, from introducing civilized forms of government into those groups of islands whenever it may suit it and those islands to join together in annexation in the future. We know that the Mauritius governs islands which are a long way from the parent colony; and there is no reason why we should not be able to govern Samoa and Tonga if placed under our charge. I look upon the Federation Act passed by this Parliament last year as an exceedingly important measure, and as one which, under favourable circumstances,

will enable New Zealand to exercise this governing power. If New Zealand is able to introduce a stable and civilized form of government into those islands, I have much mistaken the purport and scope of the wishes of the other colonies if such a course would fail to be in harmony with their views, or if there would be any risk of personal ambition preventing New Zealand adopting such a course. I take it that what Australia wishes is to see those islands under a stable form of government, and that, if such should take place by any action on the part of New Zealand, no personal jealousy will stand in the way. In common with the honourable member for Egmont, I have to thank the House for allowing me to make these remarks at such a time.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I think every one must realize the very great difficulties under which every member who has spoken in the debate has addressed the House to-night, because in all the speeches there has been an evident desire to discuss the subject thoroughly, and at the same time a feeling that the House is impatient, and that it is almost impossible, under the circumstances, to do justice to such an important subject. It is very remarkable that, although the Premier, the Colonial Treasurer, and the honourable member for Egmont have told us that it was unfortunate that this question was delayed until the dying moments of the session, we have had no reason given us why it was so delayed. If the subject is of the vast importance attached to it to-night, I think it would have been expedient, not to say anything else, that the Ministry should have given a clear statement as to why they had not dealt with it at an earlier stage. My own impression was that the Government did not attach much practical importance to this question, and that for that reason they allowed it to remain over on the chance of a discussion being taken upon it before the end of the session. I was really surprised to find, both in the speech of the Premier and in that of the Colonial Treasurer, although not in so great a degree in the latter, that the Government attached very great importance to this question. I should have very much liked to know how it was they did not bring it down before, when we might have had an exhaustive discussion upon it. not one of those who have ever attached practical importance to this question. It may be strange to say, but I have never yet been able to realize the very great importance of it; and I may possibly be in a minority in that view, although I do not know that I am, altogether. I believe that, taking the people of New Zealand throughout, I am in a majority, because, although our leading public men have taken a very deep interest in this subject, and now speak of it with an enthusiasm which they seldom display when speaking on any other subject, I am bound to say that the people throughout New Zealand have not hitherto displayed any active interest in it at all, and I cannot help observing that during the late general election there were very few constituencies in which views favourable to federation

were expressed. In most constituencies it was very difficult indeed to get any attention to the subject at all. It was not regarded as belonging to practical politics. Wherever great interest was shown in it, the verdict of the constituencies was unfavourable to federation; and it seemed to me that that was probably one of the main reasons which weighed with the Government in allowing this question, as it were, to hover on the margin of the Order Paper, on the chance of getting a discussion upon it without any practical result. The Colonial Treasurer told us he had not heard the Premier's speech; and it was quite evident he had not, because his own speech was almost as an-tagonistic to that of the Premier as it could possibly have been. It appears to me that it is proof of the immature condition of this subject that its various advocates all give different versions of it; and I hold that to-night the Premier and the honourable member for Egmont -both of whom, as I gather, are enthusiastic advocates of Australasian federation — gave quite different accounts of what the federation is to be.

Mr. STOUT .- No.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I think so. The Premier led us to believe that federation was to be merely a means by which the Australasian Colonies might deal in common with subjects common to them all; and that is exactly the opinion expressed in the preamble of the Bill. That, certainly, was the idea in the minds of the members of the Convention that drewlup the Bill, and the Premier expressed it exactly to-night in his own remarks. The preamble reads,—

"Whereas it is expedient to constitute a Federal Council of Australasia, for the purpose of dealing with such matters of common Australasian interest, in respect to which united action is desirable, as can be dealt with without unduly interfering with the management of the internal affairs of the several colonies by

their respective Legislatures."

Now, that is the view the Premier expressed to-night. He dwelt upon it very strongly. He told us that, instead of taking away from our Legislatures powers they now possess, we should gain new powers of legislation by participating in the actions of the Federal Council in regard to matters beyond our territories, and he instanced a great number of subjects beyond our powers of legislation now with which, he said, we should be able to deal if we joined in an Australasian federation. Now, what account did the honourable member for Egmont give? He told us federation meant simply a means of dealing effectively with the Imperial Government; that it had nothing to do with our local affairs, and that it was not at all desirable, in existing circumstances, that there should be any federal organization for legislating on local affairs; but that the sole purpose and object of federation, from his point of view, was to establish an effective means of communicating with the Imperial Government, so as to make the combined voice of Australasia heard loud enough to be attended to in



[HOUSE.]

the offices in Downing Street. There we had two different accounts given by two honourable gentlemen, each an enthusiastic advocate Afterwards we had a third version given by the Colonial Treasurer. He told us that the form and plan, from his point of view—and speaking also, I understood, on behalf of the Government-of the Federal Council was that it was not to be a legislative body at all, but simply a legalized Convention of colonial delegates. So here we have three totally distinct versions of it. It has always struck me - and I have watched the subject with great care—that there is really no unity of opinion, no unity even of feeling, at the present time on this subject. I would also mention a fourth opinion, which is a weighty one. The Premier and the honourable member for Egmont told us there was no intention of setting up a federation on the model of the Canadian Dominion, and the Premier told us he regretted that the word "dominion" was used so often by Australian statesmen in dealing with the matter. honourable member for Egmont told us that not a single Australian statesman had any idea that an Australasian federation was to be anything like the Canadian federation. Now, Sir Frederick Whitaker, who is the only gentleman who has addressed the people of New Zealand on this subject, told the colony, through his audience at Auckland, that the Dominion of Canada was the model the members of the Conference had before their eyes, and that, if federation succeeded in Canada, it ought also to succeed here. There we have a fourth opinion on this subject, which altogether differs from all the others. These facts have led me to the conclusion that, in differing from honourable gentlemen whose opinions on most matters I have the very highest respect for, I may not be altogether in the wrong. I confess candidly that I have never been able to realize exactly what is meant by Australasian federation, or what the practical advantages are that the colonies are to gain from it. The Premier told us to-night, speaking, evidently, with very great feeling, and with a great deal of eloquence, that what we should look forward to more than anything else in the development of these young colonies in the South Seas was the establishment of peace—that there should not be anything in the shape of war—that we should get away from the horrifying contests that have disgraced humanity and disfigured the fairest countries in the world; and he said that federation was a mere step to the realization of this dream of the highest of the human race. Now, the honourable member for Egmont, if there was any meaning in his speech, told us we ought to federate in order to go to war with France.

Major ATKINSON.—Oh!
Mr. WAKEFIELD.—Well, not actually to federate to go to war with France, but that we ought to federate so that, if France should give any trouble, we could take good care of ourselves, and see that we were in a position to fight her.

Major ATKINSON.—Oh!
Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I do not want to misrepresent the honourable gentleman. He told us that, in the event of war with France in consequence of her encroachments in the South Seas, New Zealand would be in a helpless position, and would be left to take care of herself, unless we carried these resolutions and joined in the scheme of federation of the Australasian Colonies. The honourable gentleman, therefore, had not the same pacific ideas in his mind as the Premier had.

Major ATKINSON.-Yes, I had.

Mr. WAKEFIELD. - Well,--(Interruption.)—One is speaking, on the present occasion, under very great difficulties: it would be wiser, perhaps, under the circumstances, to abandon the debate altogether. At the same time one would like to leave one's ideas on record on a subject of this sort. I certainly should not have attempted to do so had not other honourable gentlemen spoken as though the subject were one of the very greatest importance. I was going to say that, throughout all the discussions on this subject, and also in all the papers on it, there appears to me to be running all through this federation movement an idea that is certainly not in the direction of peace. We find that the common defence of the colonies is one of the subjects mentioned in the Bill on which the proposed Federal Council were to legislate, and that——(Interruption.)— There is so little interest taken, in my remarks at all events, that it is quite impossible for me to proceed. I will therefore simply say that I cannot agree altogether with the resolutions proposed by the Premier, but that I like them better than a resolution which would commit the colony further; and that the resolution of the honourable member for Auckland East which has been submitted as an amendment does not appear to me to convey any very practical conclusion—certainly not one which could lead to any definite action. I look upon it - as the honourable gentleman said—as a means of raising discussion on the subject without coming to any particular con-clusion. But I should like to say a word or two on a much greater subject brought up to-nightnamely, Imperial federation—federation of the colonies with the Mother-country. I cannot altogether agree with the views of the honourable member for Egmont or with those of the Colonial Treasurer on that subject. I may be entirely mistaken, yet I should like to express my views just as they occur to me. Honourable gentlemen have told us they are glad to contribute a share towards the New Guinea expenses, as a preliminary to paying a share of the British naval expenses in these seas, thus leading to the colonies having a share in the control of Imperial affairs. I say, if that is what federation is leading us to, it is leading us in a dangerous direction. That is what we colonia dangerous direction. nists of New Zealand have escaped from after very great trials, and with the utmost difficulty. I hold that the strongest nexus between the colonies and the Mother-country is the absence of any overt nexus at all. I may not ex-

press this wisely or well, but that is the idea I wish to express. Who can forget the many years when New Zealand had such a connection with the Mother-country as these honourable gentlemen now desire to revive; when we paid a share towards the cost of the operations of the Imperial forces; when we took a part in the control of Imperial affairs in so far as paying the whole lion's share of the expenses of the Imperial operations? What was the result of it? Was it to induce love that should exist between parent and child? Was it to improve the relations between the colony and the Mother-country? No; it was exactly the re-We never had so potent a cause of disunion and ill-feeling between the colony and the Mother-country as that very connection through monetary payments for Imperial purposes; and we never got on friendly terms with the Mothercountry - on terms of decent civility - until the Colonial Treasurer and his colleagues came into office in 1869 and had the wisdom to sweep sway the whole thing. The Premier, Sir William Fox, said, "We must, at all hazards, get rid of these causes of dispute, and cultivate friendly relations with the Colonial Office;" and the present Colonial Treasurer supported him most warmly. That was one of the wisest things ever done, I believe, the getting rid of those miserable money disputes between the colony and the Mother-country, and bringing them again together. We have never had a cross word with the Colonial Office since, and I am certain that no one will say the loyalty of the people of New Zealand has become cold. or that there has been any tendency whatever since then towards a severance of the colony from the great British Empire.

Major ATKINSON.—It was begun before

they came in.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—Well, what I wish to say is that, whoever began to effect a termination of the connection, the conclusion was come to when the Fox-Vogel Ministry came in, in 1869. Then we got the best, the real, feeling of amity and good-will between the colony and the Mother-country, which, in my opin-ion, has always attended the absence of any open connection between the colonies and the Mother-country. Take the case of Canada. There was a colony absolutely in rebellion until they were thrown on their own resources—until they were allowed to manage their own affairs entirely; and from that day to this there has never been a more loyal part of the British Empire than Canada. And so I believe it will be with these colonies; and what I dread is that we shall be led, little by little, into these contributions, and finally we shall come to a point where we shall claim control, and then will arise disputes which could not arise under other circumstances; and then we shall see those difficulties and dissensions arise between the colony and the Mother-country which the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer has, I think, most clearly pointed out. Disputes will also arise between the several colonies if they tie themselves together with a bond that is not based on necessity or on any very strong common

Sir, we have been told to-night, by feeling. honourable gentlemen who are in a position to speak with very great weight and authority on the subject, that we shall take very grave responsibility on ourselves if on this occasion we do not adopt these resolutions, or if we take any step to isolate the Colony of New Zealand. We have been told by the honourable member for Egmont that it will shut us altogether out of the great councils of Australasia in the future, and isolate us; and that, in the event of war, the Australian Colonies will be defended by the Empire, and New Zealand will be left to take care of itself.

Sir J. VOGEL .- I did not say that.

Mr. WAKEFIELD. - No; the honourable member for Egmont said that; and the Prime Minister used the very strong expression that, if we decided not to join in the federal proposals. it would be "a fatal step for New Zealand;" and we heard also that the overwhelming population of the Australian Colonies will leave us in a totally insignificant position if we stand aloof. Well, Sir, these statements have been made by honourable gentlemen whose remarks bear immense weight on such subjects; but, at the same time, I may venture to hold an individual opinion, and it is this: that, in the course of time-fifty years is a period that has been mentioned several times to-night, and within fifty years, I believe—New Zealand will be the most populous of all the Australasian Colonies. It is a country whose population increases much faster than the population of any of those colonies, and long before fifty years are over we shall be the first in the great line of ocean communication through the Panama Canal between Europe and Australia. I believe that long before half a century has passed we shall be at the head of the whole of the Australasian Colonies: first, owing to the circumstance I have mentioned, the enormous natural increase of population in this wonderfully-favoured land; secondly, in consequence of being first in the line of communication of what will be the most important ocean route in the world; and, thirdly, by the vast attractions which this colony will present for not only English people, but for other races -Belgians, Germans, and many others who now flock to the United States and other countries. Through the exceptional advantages we possess in climate, in natural conditions, and in many of our institutions this will become the home, I believe, of a great mixed race, eventually to become, by rapid assimilation, Anglo-Saxon in all the essential conditions of life. I believe that New Zealand fifty years hence will be at the head of the whole of the Australasian group, and that we shall lose nothing, I will not say by taking an antagonistic position, but by simply remaining as we are, and by not too hastily committing ourselves to a con-nection for which there has been no popular demand in this country, and the advantages of which are, to say the least, exceedingly vague and very vaguely put forth even by the warmest advocates of the scheme, and the dangers of which, as set forth very candidly by

Mr. Wakefield

the Prime Minister to-night, are very considerable and very substantial. I have trespassed too long on the House on such an occasion, but I wish to put these ideas before the House with a view to the future, because every one of us, no matter what position he holds in the House, may in the future have something to do with this matter. I should like to say that it has caused me great regret to have to differ from the honourable member for Egmont and from some other honourable gentlemen on the subject, because I am bound to say I listened with the deepest interest to their speeches, as I also did, as every one must have done, to the aloquent speech of the honourable member for Auckland East. I am not settled in my mind on this subject, though I have studied it closely, and think that in knowledge of it I am not far behind many other honourable members. feel that the proposals are premature, and that this House would do very well in doing nothing on the present occasion.

Major ATKINSON.—I wish just to say that the honourable gentleman has absolutely and entirely misunderstood the drift of my remarks as to the effect of federation on international My whole object was to promote peace in these seas, on exactly the same lines as the Premier. I had not the slightest idea of giving expression to any opinions which would have justified even in the slightest de-

gree the remarks of the honourable member for Selwyn.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I wish to be careful not to misrepresent the honourable gentleman, because I recognize that his speech is extremely important; but I was referring to that part of his speech in which he spoke of our having fleets to match the fleets of the French and armaments to match their armaments, and in which he told us that the whole of the French colonization in the South Seas was not at all colonization of our type, or what we might call peaceful settlement. It was that part of the speech I referred to, and I regret if I have

placed a wrong construction upon it.

Mr. BEETHAM.—I recognize the impossibility of laying my views on this subject before the House, and I regret it very much, because it is a question I have considered deeply and have felt deeply on for some years; but I can see plainly that, if the questions are to be put scriatim, and we are to get the business over by twelve o'clock, there is really no time for many remarks from me. I will endeavour to put the views I hold as shortly as I can. I believe that this is a step in the right direction, and a step in the direction of what we ought to look forward to, and which has been eloquently put before the House—the federation of the whole British Empire. I believe that is what we ought to look up to and lead up to gradually and firmly. From the tone of his remarks I think that I can claim the vote of the Colonial Treasurer when I move my addition to the resolution which has been moved by the Hon. the Premier. The resolution I wish to move, as an addition, is as follows: "Further, that this House is of opinion that

the time has arrived for considering the question of establishing such a union of the colonies with the Mother-country as may secure to them a voice in the determination of the Imperial policy of the Empire." I know there is no time now for me to give the House the benefit of my views, but, I think, as this is merely an abstract resolution, it cannot pos-sibly do any harm to pass it. I believe that the feeling of this House, of New Zealand, and of the whole of the colonies throughout the Empire is gradually tending towards the adoption of some system of Imperial federation. But I will not now enter into this subject at any length. So far as the resolutions now before the House are concerned, I support them. I think the honourable member for Auckland East does not give the Conference that sat at Sydney some short time ago the credit that they really deserve. Although he set forth strongly and forcibly the necessity for establishing a Protectorate in New Guinea, he did not give the Conference the credit they ought to have, because there can be no doubt it is the representations of the Australian Colonies by that Conference to the British Government that really are the main reason why we have now the action that has been initiated by the British Government. should like to have spoken on the question at some length, but I think if I ventured to do so it would prevent the Premier having his resolutions put to the House. I feel that the House would be fully justified and would act wisely in passing the resolutions brought before us, which do not pledge us, as has been already pointed out by the honourable member for Egmont, to any decisive course of action, unless what is recommended by the Federal Council has been approved of by this Parliament. Seeing that that is the case, I shall support these resolutions with great pleasure; and when the honourable member has carried his resolutions, as I sincerely hope he will, I shall move the addi-

tion I have given notice of.

Mr. HOLMES.—In rising to move the adjournment of this debate for a week, I find that it is a matter of duty to say that I am quite proud to belong to an Assembly in which four, I may say five, such able and eloquent speeches can be made upon a topic of such great national importance as this. Sir, this question, when it was first introduced to the country by the honourable member for Egmont some twelve or fifteen months ago, possibly did not receive that attention from the country that it ought to have received; and I confess, for my own part, that, having only gone into it in what might be called a cursory way, I did not see the whole bearings of the question in the same way that I have seen them to-night. Upon the platform I gave expression to opinions which I then held upon this question, and those opinions were entirely adverse to the resolutions before the House to-night. But, after listening to the extremely able speech of the Hon. the Premier, followed by the also very able speech of the honourable member for Egmont, and the -I was going to say the

Annexation and

still abler, but I will say, the-equally able speech of the Colonial Treasurer, I find that this subject has been presented to my mind in a variety of aspects in which I had never considered it before; and, Sir, these features are of such great importance to the country, and this subject itself is of such immense importance, that I think it is desirable, before coming to a vote on the question, in so very thin a House as this, the country should have an opportunity of reading the speeches and of considering the arguments that have been addressed to us in favour of these resolutions. That is why I am moving to-night in the direction I propose. I do not think that there is any very great need for the House to come to a vote upon these resolutions immediately, because at the present time we find that one of the great factors that would constitute anything in the shape of a quasi Federal Council,
—namely, the Colony of New South Wales—
has already dissented, by a small majority, from acceding to the resolutions of the Convention; and also in our own Parliament we have had dissension. It will be within the recollection of honourable members that these resolutions referring to a Federal Council have been rejected in another place; and I think, if the Hon. the Premier is, as I know he is, desirous that these resolutions should be carried by this Parliament, it would be far better for him to agree to the amendment I move, and to bring these resolutions down at the very earliest opportunity next session. In the meantime, his speech, and the Colonial Treasurer's speech, and the speech of the honourable member for Egmont in favour of the resolutions will have been read by almost every man who takes an interest in politics in the country. That is the impression created in my mind after hearing the speeches; and I also believe that these speeches will have the great merit of converting to the views of those gentlemen large numbers of those who hitherto have dissented from those views. They would also have the merit of converting the honourable gentlemen who within the last two or three days have voted against these resolutions. If they are brought before Parliament next session we shall have this House passing them almost unanimously, and they will be confirmed in another place; so that, when they are sent to the Colony of Victoria, they will go, not as the resolutions of one House only, but as the determination of both Houses of the Parliament of New Zealand. That is a very important factor in connection with the matter, and which should weigh very considerably with the Premier in inducing him to accept this motion. I tell him distinctly that, if I had had to vote before he delivered his speech, I should have voted against the resolutions; but now I shall not vote at all, because I do not think a man should change his opinions so rapidly as I should have to do if I voted for the resolutions within four or five hours of the time when I had determined to vote against them. This is too great a question and affects too deeply the future of the people of New Zealand for one of her representatives | Larnach

to alter his opinions with respect to it without long and careful consideration. Then, again, if these resolutions are carried to-night, it will go forth that they were carried when a third of the members had gone away, and that will have an injurious effect on the weight that should be given to the resolutions. Hence it is that I move, That the debate be adjourned for one week.

Mr. STOUT.—I desire to point out to the House what the adjournment of the debate means. It means shelving the question for the present; and therefore I hope the House will not agree to it. I have not time now to reply to all the statements that have been made in opposition to the resolutions, and especially to those made by the honourable member for Auckland East. I regret that very much; but perhaps he will pardon me if I point out the errors he made in two statements which he put forward. One was that England became great through a policy of isolation. Sir, she became great from adopting an exactly opposite policy. Those who have read history aright know that, when England not only interfered with but owned a great part of France, she was looked upon as almost a continental nation, and then, for the first time, she became really great, and if she has lost any of that greatness it was when she ceased to take an active part in the politics of Continental Europe. Then, he referred to the degradation of the dark races. I do not agree with him that the dark races are doomed to degradation.

Sir G. GREY.—I did not maintain that. Mr. STOUT.—Then, I presume the converse is the case, and there is hope for their progress, and they will yet be able to use the institutions which we as a white race are prepared to give Therefore I do not think that portion of the honourable gentleman's argument holds good. I hope that, however the vote goes, we shall take it to-night, so as to settle the question finally. If the motion for the adjournment should be carried it would be equivalent to "the previous question," and therefore I shall vote against it

The House divided on the question, "That this debate be now adjourned."

AYES. 23.

Barron Hirst, H. Thompson, T. B.-Bradshaw Johnston Trimble Bruce Macandrew Turnbull Dargaville Moss Wakefield Dodson White, W. Shrimski Steward, W. J. To Stewart, W. D. Hatch Duncan Fisher Grey Sutter Holmes. Noes, 25.

Atkinson

Ballance

Beetham

Brown

Fraser

Gillies

Hamlin

Guinness

Macarthur McKenzie, J. Moat Newman Peacock Richardson, E. Rolleston

Tole Vogel Walker.

Stout

Tellers.

Thomson, J. W.

Tellers.

Ross Lake Shephard Lance.

Mr. Holmes

PAIRS.

Against. For. Hurst, W. J. Gore McMillan Pearson Mitchelson Morris Montgomery Coster Russell. Pyke.

Majority against, 2.

Motion for adjournment of the debate nega-

The House divided on the question, "That the words proposed to be omitted from the original question stand part of the question."

AYES, 25. Atkinson Lance Steward, W. J. Ballance Macarthur Stout Beetham Moat Sutter Conolly Tole Newman Peacock Vogel. Fraser Gillies Richardson, E. Hamlin Tellers. Rolleston Ress McKenzie, J. Hirst, H. Walker. Lake Shephard Nors, 19. B.-Bradshaw Guinness Thomson, J.W. Rown Johnston Trimble

Mackenzie, M. Wakefield. Dargaville Dodson Moss Tellers. Duncan Shrimski Fisher Stewart, W. D. Barron Thompson, T. Macandrew. Grey PAIRS.

For. Against. Coster Montgomery · Gore Hurst, W. J. Mitchelson Morris Macmillan Pearson Pyke. Russell.

Majority for, 6.

Words retained.

Mr. MOSS.—I gave notice of an amendment, but I do not intend to move the one I gave notice of, because there is a very general desire on the part of the House that the session should end to-night; but, entertaining the strong objections I do to these resolutions, I could not assent to them on behalf of those whom I represent without an opportunity of more fully stating my views than I can possibly have to-night. I intend to move "the previous question." I do not consider that we should question." now commit New Zealand to a course from which there is no honourable retreat; and we have no right to let it go forth that these resolutions have been assented to in so small a House.

Mr. SPEAKER.—There is part of an amend-ment undisposed of. "The previous question" cannot be moved as long as there is an amendment or portion of an amendment affoat. soon as the House affirms that these words be added to the word "That," then the honourable member can move his amendment.

Mr. TURNBULL.-Would it be possible to move the adjournment of the debate?

Mr. SPEAKER .- Yes; you would be at liberty to move that.

Mr. MOSS.—I should prefer to move "the previous question," because the adjournment of the debate has been already decided.

Mr. SAMUEL.—I move the adjournment of

the debate.

Atkinson

The House divided.

AYES, 29.

Hatch Sutter Barron Bevan Hirst, H. Thompson, T. B.-Bradshaw Holmes . Thomson, J. W. Bruce . Johnston Trimble Cadman Macandrew Turnbull Mackenzie, M. Wakefield Dargaville Dodson Menteath White, W. Tellers. Duncan Moss Steward, W. J. Richardson, G. Stewart, W. D. Samuel. Fisher · Grev

Nors, 24. Lance

Shephard Ballance Macarthur Stout Beetham McKenzie, J. Tole Brown Moat Vogel Walker. Conolly Newman Tellers. Fraser Peacock Richardson, E. Gillies Guinness Hamlin Ross Rolleston. Lake

Majority for, 5.

Debate adjourned. Sir J. VOGEL.—I move, That the adjournment take place until eleven o'clock on Mon-We should not separate without coming It is nearly a year since the to a decision. question was before the Convention. It appears to me that we should be getting into bad odour if we did not deal with this subject one way or another. That the Government did not bring this subject down earlier in the session was due to a variety of circumstances —not only the large amount of business we had to get through from time to time; but the aspect of the question was very much affected by the continual intercourse the Government were having with the Governments of the other colonies, and the Agent-General at Home. I do trust the House will give itself the opportunity of considering the question, by adjourning the debate until eleven o'clock on Monday morning.

Mr. SAMUEL.—I move, That the debate be adjourned for a fortnight. The adjournment until Monday would secure very little consideration for these resolutions when they again came on for discussion. My motive in proposing an adjournment was that I did not think the House was prepared to pass such resolutions as these.

Mr. MOSS. — I second the amendment. I ask the Government not to press on this question, because it cannot be supposed the country would be bound by any decision arrived at now. It has been said that one of the greatest safeguards we had against the country being peremptorily dragged into this confederation was the fact that the Parliament must consent to it before the Imperial Act could apply to us. I have listened to the debate with the greatest interest. I think the speeches made have been

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admirable, and had something in them; and I only wish that other honourable members may also have an opportunity of expressing their sentiments. I only rise to exercise my right to ask the Government not to push this question for adjournment until Monday, but allow the subject to stand over until next session.

Mr. STOUT.—If the amendment is carried it will prevent us giving any assistance to the proposal for a Protectorate over New Guinea. To use an expressive word, it will "quash" any attempt on the part of New Zealand to have anything to do with any of the Pacific Islands

hereafter

Major ATKINSON.—I hope the House will grant what the Government ask, so as to enable the House to say on Monday what it will really do.

The House divided on the question, "That the words, 'eleven o'clock on Monday,' stand

part of the question."

# AYES, 23.

Atkinson	Larnach	Shephard
Ballance	Macarthur	Stout
Beetham	McKenzie, J.	Tole .
Conolly	Moat	Vogel
Dargaville	Newman	Walker.
Guinness	Richardson, E.	Tellers.
Hamlin	Rolleston	Gillies
Lance	Ross	Lake.

## NoEs, 23.

Barron	Hatch	Thomson, J. W
Bevan	Holmes	Trimble
B. Bradshaw	Johnston	Turnbull
Bruce	Mackenzie, M.	Wakefield
Dodson	Menteath	White, W.
Duncan	Moss	Tellers.
Fisher	Sutter	Richardson, G.
Grey	Thompson, T.	Samuel.

Mr. SPEAKER. - I think I should be consulting the convenience of the House by giving my vote so that the debate may be resumed on Monday instead of this day fortnight. I therefore vote with the "Ayes."

The words "eleven o'clock on Monday" were ordered to stand part of the question.

On the question, That the motion be agreed

Mr. MOSS said,—Perhaps the Government will make arrangements to have a "call of the House" to decide this matter. I certainly should have no objection to remain here for another week, or a month, if necessary. I do not think we should decide so important a matter hastily

Sir G. GREY .- I submit that it is not right, in a thin House like this, to bring up so impor-tant a question. I shall move that a call of the House be made; and on Monday we can adjourn till some future date. I think it is due to the country that a call of the House should be made. I move, That a call of the House be made.

Mr. SPEAKER.—You will have to give notice of that motion.

Sir G. GREY .- Very well, Sir, I give notice that I will move that motion on Monday.

Mr. Moss

Mr. SPEAKER.—You cannot give notice till Monday. The Standing Orders provide that no notice may be given after the House has proceeded to the Orders of the Day, and we have entered on that stage of business.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. STOUT.—I move, That the House do adjourn until eleven o'clock on Monday.

Mr. SEDDON.—I move, That we adjourn atil New Year's Day. It is not necessary until New Year's Day. that the House should meet again this session.

Mr. STOUT.—Then we shall get no Appro-

priation Act.

Mr. SEDDON.—I understood that the Appropriation Act had been passed.

Mr. STOUT.—It has not been reported with

the Governor's assent.

Sir G. GREY.—I really do hope that the Government will say what they intend to do. It is not respectful to Great Britain, it is not respectful to the Australian Colonies, and it is not creditable to ourselves that, in a thin House like this, so important a matter should be decided. It has been dealt with by a casting vote twice to-night. I hope the Government will not proceed further with this matter now.

Mr. STOUT.—The Government did not want an adjournment. It was forced upon them by the honourable member and others.

Sir G. GREY.—That is no answer to the im-

propriety of proceeding.

Mr. STOUT.—I do not see any impropriety in adjourning till Monday. As to a thin House, I can only say that there are more members present now than I have ever before seen present at the close of a session. There is a means of recording votes even when members are not present, and I believe that there is not a single member of the House whose vote will not be recorded.

Sir J. VOGEL.—I wish to point out to the House that the colony will be placing itself in a position of a most discreditable nature if it does not settle this question, especially that the property of the color of that part which relates to New Guinea. Not only have two successive Governments given the Home-country and the Australian Colonies the right to suppose that we should make the required contribution; but, on the strength of the position that has been taken up by those Governments, two colonies have gone security for New Zealand's payment; and therefore for us to decline to settle anything this session, especially with regard to that matter, would place the colony in a most ignoble and mean position. I cannot think that, after the reports that have been made by the two Governments, and after the other colonies have gone bail for us, this House will refuse to deal with the matter this session.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I think that, if the Government would give to the House an assurance that they will ask for nothing more than authority to contribute our share towards the New Guinea expenses, there will be no further trouble. Members, then, will be able to go

Sir J. VOGEL.—I hope honourable gentle-

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men will not go away. I cannot give any such assurance.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—I am not going away; I shall be in my place on Monday; but I am sure that, if the Government would tell the House they would take the course I suggest, there would be no further objection. I think every one in the House must agree with the views of the Colonial Treasurer as expressed in regard to the New Guinea contribution. There is a general feeling, and justly so, that we have not had a proper opportunity of considering the matter, owing to the time at which the motion has been brought down, and I believe the object the House had in view in carrying the adjournment was to shelve the As soon as that was carried resolutions. several honourable members went home, owing to conscientious objections to remaining here now that it is Sunday morning; and that is

how we have got into this predicament.

Mr. STOUT.—They paired.

Mr. WAKEFIELD.—Well, it is very strange that the division was turned by one or two

votes directly they went. . Mr. MOSS.—I move, That the word "eleven" be struck out, with a view to insert the word " two."

Mr. TURNBULL.—I move, That the House adjourn for seven days. The Colonial Treasurer stated that his policy would be to adopt a straightforward line of conduct, and that he would not bring down any important measures at the end of the session. It was most unfair to bring down an important subject of this kind at the end of the session, when we are completely exhausted, and every member has made arrangements for leaving. I regard these resolutions as mere milk-and-water; they mean simply nothing at all. If a call of the House is made, I shall be one of the strongest supporters of a want-of-confidence motion. It is a most tyrannical course to adopt towards the

Mr. STOUT.—We must meet on Monday: if we do not, the Appropriation Bill will not become law. Adjourning to any future day is of

Sir G. GREY.—The Premier has not answered the remarks of the honourable member for Timaru at all. What he objected to was bringing on this question on the last day of the session. It was an insult to the country to do so. The honourable gentleman has made no answer at all: it was simply an evasion. The honourable gentleman knows he is not justified in what he is doing, and, at all hazards, on Monday I shall move a vote of want of confidence in the Government. This is the most important question I ever heard raised in this House. I believed myself that the question would not come on to-night; and that was the general opinion. I never heard of so unfair a thing It seems to me incredible that being done. such a thing has been done. On Monday, if I can get a very few people to stand by me—I do not care how long it takes—I shall endeavour to fight this question by whatever means Providence puts into my hands.

Mr. SEDDON.—If two o'clock is carried, will the Government take it as an indication that the House disagrees with the resolutions?

Federation.

Mr. STOUT.—No. Mr. M. J. S. MACKENZIE.—It appears to me that the whole difficulty would be got over if the Government gave us the assurance asked for by the honourable member for Selwynthat they would only deal with the proposal as to New Guinea. I am one of those who think it was highly improper to bring on this question on the last day of the session, more especially as there was a feeling abroad that the Government were very careless about it. The Colonial Treasurer told the country that it was not a

pressing question at the present time.

Mr. STOUT.—I am sorry I cannot give the assurance asked for. We stated that we didnot make this a party question, but we asked the House to come to a decision one way or the other, and I think honourable members ought to have done that, instead of carrying the adjournment. I cannot now give any assurance as to what we will do, without consulting the Cabinet. We must keep faith with the other

colonies.

Mr. LARNACH.—I am surprised at honourable members saying it was improper for the Government to bring this forward on the last day of the session. It has been on the Order Paper for the last three weeks, and the Government could not have brought it on before this. I do hope that the Government will stick to their resolutions, and carry them on Monday at eleven o'clock.

Mr. Moss's amendment negatived.

Mr. DUNCAN.—There is no doubt that the Government have carried their resolutions; but I say they are not very creditable. The part I took was simply to kill those resolutions, and that was the part taken by others who opposedthem, because we think there is plenty of time to consider them in future instead of now whenwe are all anxious to get to our homes. If the matter had been put fairly, there is no doubt we should not have got into this difficulty. We did not wish to burke the question in any other way, but to vote direct against it. Now, the Premier stated openly that the thing would be confined to one particular affair the Government are interested in, which indicated that they had little or no interest in the other. That is the impression the honourable gentleman's words left on my mind.

Sir J. VOGEL. — I think honourable members scarcely do justice to the difficulties of the position of the Government. The eyes of the world are on this question. It is not a question of New Guinea only, but a question of whether we are to be a party to the Federal Enabling Bill being brought in in the present autumn session of the Imperial Parliament, or before-this House meets again in June or July next. We are bound to get the decision of the House. We should be placed in a most contemptible. position if-after all the action we have taken, after giving authority—a continuing authority —from the late Government to the Agent-General to associate himself with the other -540

Agents-General in this matter, after all the action we have taken with the other colonieswe are not in a position to say what the views of the House are upon the two questions: first, whether or not we shall contribute to the New Guinea expenses; and, secondly, whether or not we are to support the Federal Council Enabling Bill. If our resolutions are passed the House will bind itself to the New Guinea contribution, and give its assent, in a modified form, to the Enabling Bill. It is utterly impossible that the Government can be a party to allowing the question to remain undecided. It would place us in a contemptible position, not only as to the other colonies, but at Home. It would put us in the position of discrediting our own Agent-General, and our own action with the other colonies; it would put the colony in a position it has never been in before, and in

which I hope it never will be. If the resolutions are rejected, there will be nothing to be said but that the option always reserved to

Parliament has been expressed in the negative.

But that Parliament should not express any

opinion would place the colony in such a posi-

tion that I hope the House will see it is the

duty of the Government, however distasteful it may be, to press on the matter and ask the

House to come to a decision. Mr. J. W. THOMSON.—Both the Premier and the Treasurer have stated that there has been a good deal of correspondence with the other colonies, and they give this as a reason why it is necessary to come to a decision at once. Now, I ask, if there is any correspondence more than has been presented to the House, will the Government be prepared to lay it on the table? Surely it is necessary we should have it all, before coming to a decision.

Mr. STOUT.—Yes. I do not think there is any more. I have kept nothing back. if there should be any more, it shall be forth-

coming. Mr. MOSS.—I think there is a way out of the deadlock. I heartily agree to the New Guinea contribution, and there is a large majority in favour of it. But, if the Government insist on bringing the other large question forward, they may depend on it there will

be a strong demand for a call of the House.

Mr. GILLIES.—It is a year since the Conference took place, and the subject has been more or less before the public since; it has been discussed in the newspapers, and was the subject of discussion on the hustings during the last election. These resolutions have been before us a long time on the Order Paper, and to-night we have had one of the ablest debates of this session; and I venture to say that, if every member in the House had spoken, it would not alter the decision already come to in the mind of one man. I have heard enough to enable me to make up my mind, and it seems to me we ought to have made up our minds tonight on the matter.

Mr. G. F. RICHARDSON.—I think there has been some want of understanding in this matter. I voted for the adjournment believing it would kill the resolutions, as I thought,

after the actual question of adjournment had been agreed to, that the mover would propose an adjournment to a future day, to prevent them coming on again. I think most honour-able members voted in that direction, and I think the Government might very well accept that division as the opinion of this House with regard to carrying the resolutions.

Mr. STOUT.—We cannot do it.

Mr. BEETHAM.—The whole question has been for a long period before honourable members, and those who have left the House went on their own responsibility; and I think we are perfectly justified in thinking, as to them, that silence means assent. If they did not pair, I think we have a perfect right to assume that they assent.

Dr. NEWMAN.—Sir, of what use is it to continue this discussion? After the decision that has been already come to, we may go on arguing till eight o'clock, and then cannot but be in exactly the same position as we are in now.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at five minutes to one o'clock a.m.

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Monday, 10th November, 1884.

Hon. Mr. Pharasyn-Prorogation.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at eleven o'clock.

PRAYERS.

# HON. MR. PHARAZYN.

The Hon. Mr. PHARAZYN.—I ask leave to make a personal explanation. In the paper this morning there is the following letter from the Hon. Mr. P. A. Buckley:-

"To the Editor of the New Zealand Times.

"Sib,—You were pleased to publish in your paper of the 6th November instant a letter signed 'C. J. Pharazyn.' Will you, in justice to me, publish the enclosed telegram received

by me to-day?—
"'In my presence in the lobby of the House I heard Pharazyn say that, unless you remitted his fine of £100, he would vote against every measure of the Government.'

"I make no further comment.—Yours, &c., "P. A. BUCKLEY.

"Wellington, Nov. 8, 1884."

Now, Sir, this is totally at variance with the statement the Hon. Mr. Buckley made in this Council, which was this:

"I regret to be obliged to say so much; but there is a matter which I cannot pass over without alluding to it in very plain language. Intimidation of a very peculiar character has been offered to myself by an honourable gentleman who sits in this Chamber, who yesterday, as I was on my way to this Chamber, stopped me in a very rude manner, and said—I took his words down at the time-' I wish to inform

you that I will vote against every measure introduced by the Government until a petition which I presented to the Government, asking for relief from fines imposed on me, has been decided by the Executive.'"

Well, Sir, that I denied in the paper.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Read

further. The Hon. Mr. PHARAZYN.—"This honourable gentleman yesterday informed me that such was his intended mode of action." Well, I deny that positively. I deny positively that any such conversation took place between myself and the honourable gentleman. As for what the Hon. Mr. Campbell reports, most of us know that, unfortunately, Mr. Campbell is not always in his right senses. What he said took place did not take place. What the Hon. Mr. Campbell stated he heard me say to some one else was simply untrue. I am very rarely in the lobby, but on this occasion I was: it was when the East and West Coast Railway was under discussion, and the Hon. Mr. Campbell came up to me and asked me if I would support the Bill. I said, "No, I shall cer-tainly not; but I question whether, in my present position, I can support any measure of the Government, as it would look as if I were acting from corrupt motives." That was a very different thing. I was influenced by a feeling on my part that corrupt motives might be imputed. Nothing more passed; but just before the meeting of the Chamber I came across the Hon. Mr. Martin and the Hon. Mr. Johnson, and I heard it imputed to me that I had threatened the Government—that the Hon. Mr. Campbell had raised a report that I had threatened the Government in some way. When Mr. Campbell left the chamber I went out and followed him, and said, "Mr. Campbell, did you state that I threatened the Government in any way?" He said, "I did." Well, Sir, I said, "That is a deliberate lie." I gave him "the lie direct," at once. I know it was wrong, but I was indignant at having such a grave accusation brought against me. I am happy to say that I soon cool down; and in the afternoon I made an apology to Mr. Campbell in the presence of Captain Fraser. I made him an apology, and he accepted it in good part; and I said, "You quite misunderstood my meaning." I can only come now to one conclusion. At the same time that the Hon. Mr. Buckley stated the accusation against me he informed the Council that my petition had been rejected. I do not wonder at it. If the Hon. Mr. Buckley could go to the Executive and use words of this kind with reference to myself, I think they were quite right in rejecting my petition at once. It would have been great insolence on my part to have threatened anything of the kind. As to my threatening the Government, it would have been like a mouse threatening a cat, so insignificant it would have been. Sir, I regret to have to make these remarks. Mr. Buckley

this to pass without bringing it before the Chamber. He showed me this telegram before it was published, and if he had only been wise enough to keep it quiet I should have said nothing more about it. Of course I shall hear what the honourable gentleman has got to say, and I shall give notice of a motion for next sitting-day. I do not wish to say anything more now, and I am extremely sorry that Mr. Buckley has put himself in such a position. Of course it may be a laughing matter to some gentlemen, but it is a source of very great pain to me. I leave it to him to explain it in any way he can. There is a part I quite omitted; it is that, immediately after this conversation when I met Mr. Camp bell and unfortunately lost my temper and gave him "the lie," he said, "Oh, come to Mr. Buckley, and we will see what Mr. Buckley says." We came round—the Council was just about to meet—and saw the Hon. the Colonial Secretary. He said, "I have nothing to do with it; I will bring it on the floor of the Council. I have nothing to do with it now."

He would not hear any explanation, as he said he would bring it on the floor of the Council. That was what passed with the Hon. Mr.

The Hon. Mr. P. A. BUCKLEY.—Sir, might I be allowed to refer to what the honourable gentleman has said, as it has been a direct attack upon me? The honourable gentleman says that, had I been wise enough to keep the matter quiet, I should be now in a very different position. Sir, the honourable gentleman took the very unusual course of writing to the newspaper about a matter which took place in this Council. I spoke very plainly to the honourable gentleman, and he never took the slightest trouble to reply to what I stated in this Council until Mr. Campbell had gone away. Mr. Campbell was present when the honourable gentleman spoke to me in the corridor and made use of the language which I have mentioned; and it is to be regretted that the honourable gentleman had no answer to make to me until Mr. Campbell had left, and that he then wrote to the news-My first inclination was to bring the matter before the Council as a breach of privilege: probably it was one; but I thought better of it, and took no notice of it. However, I telegraphed to Mr. Campbell to give me his recollection of what took place, and that is his reply. Before publishing it, I showed it to the honourable gentleman, and told him that I intended publishing it, as a contradiction to what I considered a glaring misstatement by the honourable gentleman about the conversation that took place in the lobby of this Council. I did not seek the conversation with the honourable gentleman, but he stopped me, in the manner I have already mentioned, and informed me of this. Now he says no doubt it is only natural that the Government should not remit this fine after this threat had been is a personal friend of mine, but I have never had much respect for him: he is, however, a kind-hearted man. But I could not allow the honourable gentleman and this Council,

with a view to setting him right, that the decision that was previously arrived at was that the fine was not to be remitted. I do not know what to think of the honourable gentleman. He was good enough to allude to Mr. Campbell in a way which I think reflects very little credit upon himself; and I think if Mr. Campbell had been here he would not have ventured to say what he did. We all know Mr. Campbell, and respect him; and I regret to say that the Hon. Mr. Pharazyn has not risen in my estimation by what he has done. He took the very unusual course of writing to the newspaper; he had not the courage to reply to me after I addressed the Council, but allowed the matter to remain in abeyance until the gentleman who was with me when the conversation took place had gone home.

The Hon. Mr. PHARAZYN.—There is only one explanation I wish to make. Mr. Buckley never informed me of his intention to publish that letter in the paper—not a word of it.

that letter in the paper—not a word of it.

The Hon. the SPEAKER.—The honourable gentleman is out of order.

# PROROGATION.

The Hon. the SPEAKER acquainted the Council that His Excellency the Governor had been pleased to grant a Commission to the honourable members therein named for proroguing this session of the General Assembly.

The Commissioners, the Hon. Sir WILLIAM FITZHERBERT, K.C.M.G., the Hon. PATRICK ALPHONSUS BUCKLEY, the Hon. WILLIAM HUNTER REYNOLDS, and the Hon. GEORGE MARSDEN WATERHOUSE, having seated themselves, commanded the Clerk of the Council to signify to the House of Representatives that the Commissioners desire their immediate attendance in the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the Commission read.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives, accompanied by honourable members, attended.

The Hon. the SPEAKER said,-

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

His Excellency the Governor, not thinking fit to be personally present at this time, has been pleased to cause a Commission to be issued, under the seal of the colony, appointing certain honourable members Commissioners for proroguing this present session of the General Assembly, which you will now hear read.

Then the said Commission was read by the CLERK, and is as follows:—

VICTORIA, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith:

> To the Honourable Sir WILLIAM FITZ-HEBBERT, Knight Commander of our Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Speaker of our Legislative Council of our Colony of New Zealand; the Honourable PATRICK ALPHONSUS BUCKLEY; the Honourable WILLIAM HUNTER REY-Hon. Mr. P. A. Buckley

NOLDS; and the Honourable GEORGE MARSDEN WATERHOUSE, members of our said Council,

Greeting:

WHEREAS the General Assembly of our Colony of New Zealand was begun and holden at the Parliament Houses, in Molesworth Street, in the City of Wellington, on Thursday, the seventh day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, and is there now Now know ye that, for certain causes and considerations, we have thought fit to prorogue the said General Assembly; and therefore we, confiding in your fidelity and dis-cretion, have assigned and appointed you, the said Sir William Fitzherbert, Patrick Alphonsus Buckley, William Hunter Reynolds, and George Marsden Waterhouse our Commissioners, giving to you, or any two of you, by virtue of these presents, full power and authority, in our name and in the name of our Governor of our said Colony of New Zealand, to prorogue and con-tinue the General Assembly of our said colony, at the said Parliament Houses, in Wellington aforesaid, from Monday, the tenth day of November instant, until and unto Thursday, the nineteenth day of March, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, there and then to be holden and sit; and therefore we command that you diligently attend the premises, and effectually fulfil them in manner aforesaid, commanding all and singular the members of the said General Assembly, and all whom it concerns, that they meet in the said Assembly, by virtue of these presents, and that they observe, obey, and assist you in executing the premises as they ought.

In testimony whereof we have caused our letters to be made patent, and the seal of our said colony to be hereunto fixed.

Witness the hand of our trusty and wellbeloved Sir William Francis Drummond Jervois, Lieutenant-General
in our Army, Knight Grand Cross
of our Most Distinguished Order of
Saint Michael and Saint George,
Companion of our Most Honourable
Order of the Bath, Governor and
Commander-in-Chief in and over
our Colony of New Zealand and
its Dependencies, and Vice-Admiral
of the same; at the Government
House, at Wellington, this tenth
day of November, in the year of
our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four, and in the
forty-eighth year of our reign.

By His Excellency's command. .
R. Stour.

The Hon. the SPEAKER then said,—By virtue of His Excellency's Commission, under the seal of the colony, to us directed, and read, we do, in His Excellency's name and in obedience to his command, proroque this session of the General Assembly to the 19th day of March, 1885; and this session of the General Assembly is proroqued accordingly to Thursday, the 19th day of March, 1885.

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# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Monday, 10th November, 1884.

Wattle-bark—Annexation and Federation—Supply Bills—Business of the Session—Prorogation.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at eleven o'clock a.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### WATTLE-BARK.

Mr. ROSS asked the Government, If they are aware that about two years ago several thousands of pamphlets treating on the cultivation of the wattle were circulated, and a large quantity of seeds distributed gratuitously throughout New Zealand, at the cost of Messrs. Michaelis Hallenstein and Farquhar, of Dunedin, and that bonuses of £150 for the first 100 tons, £100 for the second 100 tons, and £50 for the third 100 tons of wattle-bark grown in the colony were offered by the same firm, the bonuses being in addition to the market value of the article; and whether the Government will, during the recess, cause inquiry to be made in the various land districts as to what extent, if any, the wattle is now being cultivated in the colony for bark-producing purposes?

Mr. STOUT said the Government were aware that the firm named—Messrs. Michaelis Hallenstein and Farquhar, of Dunedin—had circulated a great number of pamphlets, and did what they could to encourage the growth of wattle; and the Government would, during the recess, ascertain what had been done in this

direction.

# ANNEXATION AND FEDERATION.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Mr. BARRON. — The amendment proposed by the honourable member for Oamaru, if moved against the whole of the resolutions, will, I venture to say, be approved of by the people throughout the colony. Its purport I understand to be this: that, seeing the attitude taken by the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales regarding the Federal Coun-cil Bill, this House is of opinion that further negotiations should take place between the colonies before the Federal Bill is enacted, and that further consideration of the question be postponed till next session of Parliament. I hope the amendment of the honourable member for Oamaru will be carried so as to replace the whole question, and that the House will not proceed to consider the resolutions seriatim, if only because of their great importance, and the imperfect consideration we can now give to them in the two or three hurried hours of the and of the session. The resolutions commit the colony to serious and what will prove to be rapidly-accumulating political and pecuniary responsibilities, which require the most careful consideration by a full Parliament before being passed, even if it is desirable they should be passed at all, of which I have the gravest doubt.

The House divided on the question, "That this House resolves that it agrees generally with the resolutions of the said Convention; but, in order that its views may be specifically expressed, it resolves as follows:"

### AYES, 86.

Atkinson .	Tocke	Ross .
Ballance	Macarthur	Shephard
Beetham	McKenzie, J.	Shrimski
Cowan	Menteath	Steward, W. D.
Fergus	Moat	Stout
Fitzherbert	Morris	Sutter
Fraser	Newman	Taiaroa
Fulton	Peacock '	Tole
Gillies	Pearson	Vogel.
Hakuene	Pere	Tellers.
Hamlin	Pyke	Lance
Hirst, H.	Richardson, E	. Walker.
Lake	•	

### Nozs, 21.

Bevan	Johnston	Thomson, J.
Bruce	Macandrew	Trimble
Dodson	Richardson, G.	Turnbull
Duncan	Russell	Wakefield.
Fisher	Samuel	Tellers.
Grey	Smith	Barron
Guinness	Te Ao	Moss.
Hatch		

#### PAIRS.

T ALMO:		
For.	Against.	
Bryce	Thompson, T.	
Coster	O'Conor	
Gore	Reese	
Harper	Allwright	
Hursthouse	Hobbs	
Larnach	Dargaville	
Mitchelson	Cadman	
O'Callaghan	Montgomery	
Rolleston	White, W.	
Whyte, J. B.	Levestam.	

Majority for, 15.

Resolution agreed to.

Mr. STOUT moved, (a.) That it approves of the steps taken by the British Government for the establishment of its rule over New Guinea, and hopes that like measures will be taken for a Protectorate over the islands of the Pacific Ocean not under the dominion of any stable Government.

Sir G. GREY.—I wish to know whether the Government intend to pass all these resolutions through or not, so that we may decide what

course we shall take.

Mr. STOUT.—That is really for the House to determine. If the House, however, is willing to come to a compromise and accept the resolution of which notice has been given by the honourable member for Oamaru, I, personally, shall not be against that course being taken. We can pass (a) and (b), and then consider the resolution of the honourable member for Oamaru.

Sir G. GREY.—Well, Sir, I hope we shall discuss the whole subject fully, and I shall

move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I presume the honourable member will move the adjournment of the

To adjourn the House would be to dispose of the whole matter—to do nothing.

Sir G. GREY.—I shall be glad to dispose of the whole matter altogether if I can, and therefore I prefer to move the adjournment of the House, so as to raise the whole question. I wish to put it to honourable gentlemen — for there are some present here to-day who did not hear the previous discussion—that the resolution just carried is of so serious a nature that I think it would be better for us now to postpone the whole matter until next session.

Mr. SHRIMSKI. - It would be better to

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agree to my proposal.
Sir G. GREY.—I quite go with the honourable gentleman's proposal, and shall support it if I can get nothing better; but I think that the subject is one of such vast importance to this country that it ought not to be disposed of while so many members are absent. ought not to be disposed of at the end of the session in this hurried manner. The House has now affirmed that it generally agrees with the propositions for federation which were adopted by a Conference at Sydney. That is the meaning of the thing—that this House con-ceives that federation with the Australian Colonies is a desirable step to take. Now, I submit that such is not the case. I heard many statements made to this House upon this subject, after I lost my power of speech the other evening, which must have led the House astray. For instance, it was stated by many members, one after the other, that if we entered into this federation it would be quite possible for us to get out of it again. I deny that altogether. The arguments in this respect were twofold. One was that the Australian Colonies would not object to our leaving a confederation into which we had once entered with them-that they would readily consent to our doing so; and the other argument was that, if they did not consent to it, the British Government would interfere on our behalf and free us from the yoke we had put upon our necks. I answer that there would be no hope whatever that the Australian Colonies would permit our withdrawing from a confederation of this nature, if we once entered into it. If we once became liable to bear a large pecuniary burden with them, if we once agreed to accept laws made by a Federal Council of that kind, even partially, there would be no hope whatever that they would relieve us from the burden of such payment, or of conformity to their laws. Can any example be given to us in which a federated nation has allowed a very rich and important portion of such confederation to re-tire from it? On the other hand, look at the example of the United States, and the civil war which sprang from such an attempt. But I will not proceed to argue that part of the subject further. I am sure that every impartial mind will confess that there would be no hope whatever that we should be allowed peaceably to retire from such a federation by other members of the federation, if once we entered it. I will now address myself to the line the British Parliament would pursue if we applied

to it to aid us to escape from such a federation. And, first, I would say that the conviction in my mind-and it must be the conviction of every man who has watched the tendency of the views of British statesmen at the present time—is this: that those statesmen who propose federation, and try to force us into it—for such an attempt has been made by some of the statesmen in Great Britain—really desire to see the British colonies cast off by Great Britain, and to see Great Britain relieved from what they regard as a great burden. The Premier said, on one or two occasions, that the colonies were forced to adopt this course because Lord Derby had said that he would not receive any representations upon certain subjects except through the colonies combined. Earl Derby never made such a statement.

Mr. STOUT.—I said nothing of the kind. It was the honourable member for Egmont who

said so.

Sir G. GREY.—Well, the honourable member for Egmont stated this. To which I reply that, if he (Lord Derby) stated that, I believe he forgot his duty; and I am also certain that, if he did state it, he saw that the effect of such a great confederation as this would be, according to his present view, to build up a dominion in these seas which could stand apart, if Great Britain chose to get rid of the colonies. I firmly believe, also, that he was sagacious enough to see further than that, and see - what the Colonial Treasurer himself the other night admitted would be the fact — that the tendency of this federation would be to create a strong body that would break off from Great Britain as a whole and cease to form part of the Empire-that, in fact, a new nation would be formed, consisting of Australia and New Zealand. Not only that, but the honourable member for Egmont went a degree further and pointed out what was one step which would certainly lead to such a result. He said this: that New Zealand and Australia would be so powerful that their wishes must be attended to by Great Britain - that they could, in point of fact, That is, force their views upon the Empire. it was admitted that differences possibly would arise between Great Britain and her provinces, which differences would be enforced with such strength that further disputes and differences might arise therefrom. I wish to do nothing of the kind, so far as I am concerned. I wish to enforce our desires, not by strength, but by reason. I wish that New Zealand should—at all events until a different state of things has arisen from that which now exists-remain an integral portion of the Empire, confederated with that Empire; and I wish to be federated with no other Power upon earth. attempt to confederate us with Australia is to remove us from Great Britain. We can only approach Great Britain, then, through a Federal Council; we can no longer approach her as an integral portion of the Empire, standing alone, looking to our own interests in the first place, and then considering those interests generally with the interests of Great Britain

Mr. Speaker

and the entire Empire. And that is the proper position for us to occupy. Further, we were told that we relinquish no power we possees by being federated with Australia; that, on the contrary, a Federal Council would be established there to which greater powers would be given than were intrusted to this colony. To that I do not agree. I think Great Britain would give no greater powers to a Federal Council of that kind which she would not give to us. It may be said that, owing to the smallness of our population, any representations we might make to Great Britain would not have the same effect as representations made from so populous a country as Australia; but to that I answer that our population will in-crease rapidly, that the difference between us is therefore, comparatively speaking, trifling, and that Great Britain will undoubtedly give to New Zealand the same powers as she will confer on Australia. In point of fact, she has already given greater powers to us Constitution than the Australians possess Constitutions. Then, under their present Constitutions. Then, again, I say we can obtain no possible advantage from being federated with Australia. On the contrary, we shall be subject to laws made

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in a distant place——
Mr. STOUT.—I rise to a point of order. I do not wish to interrupt the honourable gentleman, but I think there is an important precedent involved. I wish to know if the honourable member can discuss, on a motion for the adjournment of the House, an Order of the

Day on the Paper not yet moved.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The honourable member has moved the adjournment of the House, which, if carried, will have the effect of disposing of the notice of motion. What is being discussed is the federation of New Guinea and the other islands of the Pacific, and it is clearly in the competence of the honourable member, in order to save that motion from being disposed of by a motion for adjournment, to allude to the merits of the motion. But he is not allowed to go beyond the discussion of that particular motion and the motion to adjourn the House. He has not the same wide range that he would have if he had moved the adjournment of the House when nothing else was before it. But this question of federation of New Guinea and all the Pacific Islands comes clearly within his right on a motion for the adjournment of the House.

Sir G. GREY. — The Premier did not wish to interrupt me, or to prevent me from saying things he did not like to hear. But he made a great mistake. He will hear a great deal more, before I finish, that he does not wish to hear. I contend that, in discussing this question of federation, I may mention every subject that belongs to it. I was remarking that, if we get into a federation of this kind, we shall be subject to laws made by a very distant Federal Council, which may be very objectionable to us here; and the reply to that has been that we shall have to put into the Act a provi-sion that laws of the Federal Council shall not have force in New Zealand until adopted by

this Parliament. What nonsense to talk to us in that way! That is what the Premier said. But is he to draft the Federal Act? tell us what form it will take? We have no power whatever to dictate what that law shall be; and, if we agree to go into federation, we may rely upon it that the British Parliament, in framing that Act, will act in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the States to be federated. But, even if such a provision is to be put in, let us see what we have now. Under what circumstances are we to be forced into this federation? On the very last day of the session, with a thin House, the destinies of New Zealand for ever are to be dealt with; and by whom? Why, the main person in this—the Colonial Treasurer — is a gentleman largely interested in forcing federation on. We have heard enough of that this session. We have heard enough of that this session. seen an enormous debt entailed on the colony by interested persons sitting on those benches. We have seen the Premier, the solicitor of a company largely interested in this-

Mr. SPEAKER.—That is going outside the

Sir G. GREY.—I most respectfully submit that, in considering this confederation and the Protectorate to be established, we may consider the persons by whom it is being brought about in this House. I may warn the House. I may warn the House not to accede to their request.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I can see no connection between the private acts of the honourable gentlemen sitting on my right and this ques-

tion of federation.

Sir G. GREY.—But, Sir, if one of the honourable gentlemen sitting on your right is largely interested in Australia, surely that is the ques-

Mr. SPEAKER.—I have given the utmost latitude in the discussion of this question, and I must expect honourable members to confine

themselves to what I have laid down.

Sir G. GREY.—In that case, we shall have to submit ourselves to our fate, which I believe to be a very sad fate indeed. I go on to say that great influences may be brought to bear in this House hereafter. Suppose that this federation takes place, and it is desirable, for instance, to get a law carried here which the Federal Council wish to impose upon us, what a vast danger we shall run! It may be possible, by immense concessions of land, or in some ways, to exert an influence on this House. Do not let it be said that this is a fanciful idea. We have seen the Ministers of Charles II. brought under the control of Louis XIV. through large concessions made to them by France. Various means were exerted leading the British Parliament to commit very wrongful acts, the Parliament being left in ignorance of the real position of Ministers in reference to what they received from France at the time. That is one danger that might arise if you go into a federation of this sort. Then, I may ask members again, what common interests can there really be, upon an immense number of subjects, between New Zealand and Australia? I say, upon many subjects, there is absolutely none.

The Australian Colonies will have common interests amongst themselves totally different from those which we have here. I believe that the number of colonies in Australia must ultimately be eight or nine, and New Zealand will be one-ninth or one-tenth in power in a federa-tion of that sort. Why sink itself into insig-nificance of that kind? What advantage possibly can be given to the inhabitants of this country to compensate for an evil of that sort? Let me put another point to you. You will find hereafter great difficulties taking place in Anstralia, as in the United States—now put an end to, after great distress being brought upon the American people. You will find that immense concessions in land will be given for the construction of railways. The people will be robbed of their patrimony in that manner, and you will find that example brought to New Zealand, and a number of persons benefiting, in these great disastrous transactions in Australia, robbing the people of New Zealand of vast tracts of land here, handing over millions of acres, perhaps, to companies, who will make the people of New Zealand their tenantry, by taking away from them that land of which they ought to be the lords and owners themselves. There is no doubt that these bad examples will be introduced and followed hereindeed, this has already been done-and the people will lose all independence of spirit, and all chance of maintaining the rights in this country which at the present moment they possess. Is it right or just that a growing population of the kind we have here should be governed in many important respects by a Federal Council at a great distance from them? And does any one believe that there will be any limit to the powers of a Federal Council, once you establish it? What de-stroyed the provinces? Was it this General Assembly? What deprived the people of New Assembly? What deprived the people of New Zealand of the great powers of self-government they had? Was it this General Assembly—this great Council? And what body will take from New Zealand the privileges which she now enjoys, if you establish a great Federal Council in Australia? What body, step by step, will usurp power after power that we possess? Can any one believe that a great and powerful federal Legislature will ever cease to attempt to gain all our present advantages, and to rob every one of the distant tages, and to rob every one of the distant regions under its sway of the powers of selfgovernment which they now have? put an illustration the other night, which was much misunderstood, and I will venture to repeat it again. I will say this: Supposing that England — Great Britain — had been federated with France, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Russia, and that a Federal Council had been established, issuing federal laws to which Great Britain would have been subjected as well as other portions of that federation, does

have prevailed in so many parts of the world? Can any one believe that those great autocratic Governments, with a strong Federal Council of that kind, with the power of checking England in every direction, would have rendered her the liberal nation she is at present, and have permitted her naturally to develop herself, free from all external restraint or pressure? The answer made to me on that subject by the Premier was this: "The honourable gentleman forgets that England did interfere in the affairs of the Continent at one time, that she even claimed a great portion of France, and that the monarch of England called himself King of France." All of which was perfectly true. But had it anything to do with the subject? Why, Great Britain at that time was independently pushing her way upon the Continentnot governed by a Federal Council, not stopped in what she was doing—acting unwisely, it is true—and her greatness began from the moment she ceased to indulge in foolish transactions of the kind. She was not managed by a Federal Council, she was an independent nation, at the time she did that; but any-body coolly and calmly reflecting must know that the greatness of England, the nobility and character of her people, her power of giving laws to almost the whole world, of making the English language the language of the world, her power of spreading her literature, arose from her independence from all external influence and control, which gave her literature and her people an independent character. This it was which gave England a free Press when every other nation was without it. These were all the circumstances that made England, and really blessed the world. And we are asked to depart from an example of that kind, and to say that New Zealand—as large as England, capable of carrying as large a population, with a better climate, more harbours, greater advantages in many ways-is to sacrifice her individuality in order to gratify the vanity of a few statesmen in Australia and New Zealand, who flatter one another in their correspondence and speeches. Are we to fall down and worship and foster a petty vanity of that kind? Are we thus to sacrifice the interests of a youthful nation—of the inhabitants the colony now contains, and the millions yet to come? Are we to do this in order that we may have Ministers here and Ministers in Australia, flattering one another and dictating to us what we shall do? Ought the Premier to try and force us here, at the end of the session, and at the last moment, in an empty House, to ruin the people of the country, whom he ought to save and not to sacrifice in a matter of this kind? I wonder no shame comes over the face of the Premier when I say this. This is the Premier; these are the liberal leaders, as they call themselves. In what way have they shown their liberality in any one believe that England would have been the nation she now is? Would her destiny have been the same? Would her position have been the same? Would the world have been such a world as it is? Would freedom the same with the other night—by the unlawful interference with



commerce, which it really is, by making prisoners of members of Parliament, to detain them here to vote for the Government when they wish to escape from such a necessity? Is that tyranny, or is it freedom, to some of us who sit here captives? If such a measure as this is to be carried, to enslave the whole people, I say keep our statesmen free from such things. Efforts enough are now made to inveigle them. We have an exterior influence which is always exercising a power over this House by the influence it gains by the bestowal of knight-hoods. And are we to add, to that, banquets at Melbourne to the great Mr. So-and-so, who arrives from New Zealand? Are we to have all these temptations added, to enslave the people here, who have nothing whatever to do with Australia? Well, then, again, we are told we shall have to maintain a great standing army if we do not agree to some such federation as this; and standing armies in Europe were pointed out to us. And when I said that we had nothing to do with that—that the reason why England had not to keep up a great standing army was that England was isolated by the sea, and that her separation from the Continent enabled her for years to go on with-ont a standing army, and subsequently it was always a very small one—then I was told that England was obliged to keep a great fleet in consequence. I replied that every nation had to keep a great fleet. The French fleet is quite equal to our own at the present moment; the Russian navy sometimes exceeded our own in number; so that the keeping of a fleet was not entailed by the isolation of Great Britain, but by her commerce and the necessity of protecting that—by her vast dominions spread over the world. And if New Zealand arrives at such a stage that it will be necessary for her to keep a fleet—not for purposes of war, but to protect her traders, to prevent piracy, and to keep the ocean free for the entire commerce of the world -I say it will be a blessed day when such a time comes, and that is a duty we ought cheerfully to undertake. And we shall have no larger fleet to keep if we are not under a Federal Council than we should have to maintain if we were; and we shall have this additional advantage: that the fleet will be our own, that the size and cost of that fleet will be a matter for ourselves to determine, that we shall be governed by laws of our own making, that our sailors will not be flogged unmercifully if we do not choose it. The fleet will be all our own. It will be something for us to prize, to be proud of, and not a fleet forced upon us by the demands of a distant Federal Council. We shall not be required to equip as many vessels and pay as many seamen as a Federal Council may direct, but our fleet will be our own, and will be subject to our own laws. It is infinitely better to imitate the independent greatness of England in her relations to a great continent lying near her, so far nearer to her than Australia does to us, than to forget the example she has given, and allow ourselves to become, in truth, subservient to the great Continent of Australia, as

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we must be by this federation. Will all these things make no impression on men's minds? Will they, as we sit to-day, small in number without due time for deliberation, without the country believing that this measure was to be brought forward, without its having had an opportunity of expressing its wish upon the subject—will they force on resolutions of this kind, as they have the first, and shall we say that, upon the whole, we approve of these things? Look further, and see what this re-solution means. Why, last session we passed an Act in which we tried to set an example to the whole world. And we said this: that no one of these islands in the Pacific Ocean, however small, should be annexed without the consent of the inhabitants having been previously obtained, without their being anxious for such annexation. There was an example of justice, there was an example of righteous dealing, that we hoped all nations would follow. And what does the Premier come down and make us do? Pass a resolution to this effect: that every one of those islands shall be taken possession of, whether they desire it or not. That is the proposal. Can anything more unmerciful be conceived? What was the annexation of Poland to 'that? Why are these people to be prevented from joining Germany, if they please? Why are they to be prevented from becoming subjects of any other nation, if they desire it? Why come forward as tyrants and say they shall, whether they like it or not, come under the dominion of Australasia? Let us win them over to us. Let us gain their consent by fair means, by deferring to their own wishes. But let us not degrade ourselves as we have done to-day by passing a resolution to the effect that we approve of taking them whether they like it or not. I say such a thing ought not to be dreamt of, and ought not to be done. Further, I would put this: How can you hope to nourish a spirit of independence in New Zealand if you let all her inhabitants know that henceforth there is a probability — almost a certainty, if we pass these resolutions—they must prepare to be broken off from the British Empire? No one can doubt that the tendency of the federation as proposed must be to bring that about. I was very much pleased to hear the Colonial Treasurer, in most unqualified terms, admit that such was the case. He distinctly adthat such was the case. He distinctly admitted that. He believed undoubtedly that it would come to this: that it would be the first step to our separation from the British Empire. I am satisfied of that myself. I believe it; and, then, why should we say to the people, "Prepare for that"? And recollect that, when it takes place, you will be federated to that great continent which lies near you. It would be a great consolation to the Premier to become a part of so large a portion of the earth's surface, by being joined to a nation of that kind; but I say it will be no consolation to the people of New Zealand to be joined to that Australasian nation, but a source of sorrow. To teach them to look to that is to teach them to look to something that is mean and unworthy of **548** 

our future; it is to tell them their statesmen shall not have the patriotism which they would have if they belonged to a distinct individuality. Federate the New Zealanders, if you please, with as many other Anglo-Saxon-speak-ing nations as you like to bring under one Anglo-Saxon federation: then, indeed, their Council would be a Federal Council in truth, and its duties would be directed to the welfare of the whole human race: then, indeed, we should have ourselves federated to the whole English-speaking nations of the world, and we should achieve such a result as the world has never yet seen. But the proposition now before us is one to separate us from being able to carry out anything of that kind for a very long period of time; because it will be left to the whole of that Australian commumity to determine how our destiny shall be fulfilled, we being but a small body amongst them. It is upon this consideration that I have moved the adjournment of the House, in the hope that the Government will consent to postpone this question till next session. Let us all go to our constituents in various parts of the country and discuss this question with the whole population of New Zealand; and, if they should consent unanimously, or by a very great majority, to take either one line or the other, whatever they may determine of course their will must be carried out. But I believe, if they had had time to consider this question, from one end of the colony to the other deep indignation at the present proposal would arise, and the people would protest against any such federation as is now proposed. Sir, I say that to force these resolutions on the House at this late period of the session, when so many members have gone away, and when the country has so little knowledge of what is being done, is an act traitorous to New Zealand, unbecoming to this House, and unworthy of any Government sitting on those benches.

Sir J. VOGEL.—Sir, it is with a great deal of hesitation that I venture to express my opinion, as against that of the honourable member for Auckland East, upon a matter of I acknowledge that the honourable gentleman has filled much more distinguished positions than I have, and that he has a more extended knowledge of the world than I can pretend to. Therefore it is with great deference that I express an opinion on a question of taste as against him. But still I am so of taste as against him. But still I am so strongly impressed with the opinion that it is a want of taste and unbecoming that one honourable gentleman should so frequently refer to the private affairs of other honourable members that, in asking permission from the House to make such reference myself, I must apologize for making the request. The honour-able member for Auckland East has dragged in, on several occasions, the statement that I am largely interested in property in Australia. I have hitherto taken very little notice of those statements, because I conceive it is of very little interest to honourable members whether I am so interested or not; but on this occasion

use the argument that my large interest in Australia has influenced my opinions with regard to this proposed federation. Now, if an honourable gentleman is to refer to the private affairs of another honourable gentleman, he should at least do so with accuracy. The honourable gentleman accuses - it is hardly the proper word-me of being interested to the extent of some millions of acres of land in Australia. Having made an apology to the House for referring to the question, I now beg to say that I have an interest in leases of about 200,000 acres of pastoral land in a remote part of Australia, and 1,000 shares in a company in which there are 120,000 shares; and that the whole of my interest there amounts to some £4,000. In those days when the honourable gentleman was one of the mostheroic explorers of that continent, he passed over or in the vicinity of this land. It is gratifying to me to find he thinks it of so much value, and I only hope his anticipations will be realized. But I cannot suppose that honourable members will for one moment consider that I should look upon a great public ques-tion from the point of view of what might bethe effect upon sheep or the supply of water in a remote part of Australia by a Federal Council sitting in Tasmania. That it will not bring water to the land or wool to the sheep's backs I think we may consider a matter of certainty. Therefore, again apologizing to the House for referring to this personal matter, I pass on to another part of the question, and that is that it is very extraordinary and very ungenerous of the honourable gentleman to make such a speech as he has done to-day, in which he has utterly misrepresented the views of the Government. Every word of the honourable gentleman's speech is directed to the statement that the Government wishes to see a federal union formed between New Zealand. and the Australian Colonies; whilst the very nature of the resolutions shows we recognize the danger of entering into a federal agree-ment, and we have therefore put such a limit on the resolutions that they cannot be amenable to the criticism of the honourable gentleman. If the honourable gentleman had done me the honour of listening to the remarks I made the other evening he would have seen that such was the case. And yet I cannot help thinking that it sometimes happens that the honourable gentleman feels rather annoyed than otherwise when honourable members agree with him. If the honourable gentleman had listened to me then, he would have recognized that I expressed opinions very much in the same line as himself, and that I was of opinion that a federal union with Australia would stand very much in the way of a general federation with the English nation, which I look upon as the noblest aim wecould strive to accomplish, and one to which we should direct all our efforts. I pointed out that the honourable gentleman's resolution might be taken to mean federation with America; but he assures us that such is not the honourable gentleman has thought fit to his intention. Therefore, so far from my ideas

being widely different from his, it appears that [ we both fear that a federation with Australia would stand in the way of that larger federation which we desire to see - that is, a complete federation between the English nation and the colonies generally. Why we voted against the honourable gentleman's resolution the other evening was, that it was not relevant to the particular question to which he made it an amendment. If it had had reference to a resolution affirming the desirability of a federation of the British dominions I should have considered it one in which I could heartily We are this morning simply considering whether we shall contribute our share towards the cost of the Imperial Government establishing its rule over New Guinea, and it would be an intolerable thing if we were not to determine that question one way or the other. We have given ourselves all the airs of intending to do so, and our Agent-General is acting at Home on the assumption. The House last session passed a resolution that, if the cost was not beyond the means of the colony, it should be done; and, although the House is not bound to affirm that resolution, it is bound at any rate to say "Yes" or "No" to it. Again, as to the resolution with regard to the annexation of further islands of the Pacific, that is but a repetition of an opinion which the House has already expressed. As to the establishment of a Federal Council, we have so altered the resolution that, instead of leading up to federation, it becomes much more a convention by which the colonies can consult together on matters of common interest. I look upon that as a very different thing from federation. Therefore, Sir, the questions before the House are—that first point to which I have referred, and on which we are bound to express an opinion; and then there is the other point, of whether the House approves of a modified form of Federal Council. We ask upon that point, as upon the other, that the House should give some direction. At present the Agent-General is acting with uncertainty as to the course the House will take, and the other Australasian Colonies wish to know what we intend to do. It is incumbent on the House to say "Yes" or "No," or that it will adjourn the consideration of the question; and all we ask is that the House will give us some expression of opinion.

Mr. FISHER.—I have opposed these resolutions consistently and persistently, despite the repeated taunts of the Premier, who, on Saturday evening, said that we had not the courage of our opinions; and all I desire now to say is this: that, if the Government find themselves in an awkward position, or the interests or the honour of the colony are in any way likely to be imperilled by the rejection of the resolutions, they have themselves to blame for having kept them floating about as flotsam and jetsam on the sea of Parliament for the past three weeks. Why, I ask, should this federation question be regarded as a matter of such urgency? Is it not a fact that the Parliament itself is very much divided upon the subject?

On Saturday evening two exceedingly able and interesting speeches were delivered in favour of the resolutions, and we likewise had the pleasure of listening to two equally able speeches against them; and, when there exists amongst the leaders of this House such a diversity of opinion, how can it be supposed that we who do not pretend to be leaders can as yet have formed any definite opinion upon such an important question? Then, again, the people of the colony have not as yet expressed any opinion upon it. Wherever the subject was mentioned to the constituencies it was received with marked inattention, which is clear proof that it is not, to them, a matter of absorbing interest. Why, Sir, what is federation? If I were to say that it is a great piece of humbug I should be laughed at by the brilliant intellects which adorn the Ministerial benches, and by those other brilliant gentlemen who compose the Opposition front. I should be told either that my mind was too much contracted by localism, or that it was not yet suf-ficiently expanded to enable me to take a liberal, intelligent, and comprehensive view of the subject. But, when I mention that that opinion has already been expressed by Sir Julius Vogel, it will perhaps be received with some little respect. I do not speak without the card. I have before me the report of a speech delivered by the honourable gentleman two years ago at Collingwood, near Mel-bourne, in which, after touching upon the questions of electricity, railways, and so forth, he declared federation to be "the greatest piece of humbug out." But I am bound, in ustice to the honourable gentleman, to say that his inconsistency upon this question is more apparent than real, for, after all, his admirable speech of Saturday evening told more against the resolutions than for them. I do not intend in any way to deal with the elaborate and eloquent speech of the Premier, which seemed to me to contain a great deal that was not practical mixed up with very little of the possible. He touched, for instance, upon the well-worn subject of a perpetual peace—of a time when there shall be no more war on the face of the earth. Sir, that is a poet's dream. It is a yearning after the impossible. I, too, sigh for the coming of a time---

. . . . when all men's good Shall be each man's rule : And universal peace shall lie like a shaft of light Across the land.

But can such a time ever come? If you could obliterate the Muscovite and the Moslem, the Saxon and the Gaul, I could believe in its near possibility; but, so long as there are racial bitternesses and animosities—and they will exist, I fear, as long as the nations endure—a universal and permanent peace is impossible. I think it would be much better to allow these resolutions to stand over until next session. Certainly this House, circumstanced as it is at the preaent moment, is not in a position to discuss them; and, if they do not receive the consideration which the Government think they

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should receive, the Government have themselves to blame for not having brought them down at an earlier period of this session. shall not say any more upon the subject now. Indeed, I should not have spoken at all had it not been for the action of the Government, first, in not bringing down these resolutions until the last day of the session, and then in twitting members with not having the courage of their opinions upon the subject.

Mr. STOUT.—I wish to make a few remarks on the speech made by the honourable member for Auckland East, and on the able and eloquent speech which we have just heard delivered by the honourable member for Wellington South. There is one point in this debate that has been entirely omitted by the honourable member for Auckland East, and I can only assume that he has forgotten it. I cannot believe that he would have made the speech he has made to-day if he had read his speech of last year, or the report which he, as Chairman of the Pacific Islands Annexation Committee, brought up to this House. What is this first resolution we are asking the House to carry? It is almost word for word with the resolution which he, as Chairman of that Committee, brought up last year and advocated in this House.

Sir G. GREY.—Look at the Bill.

Mr. STOUT. — I am going to look at the report. I am speaking of the speech the honourable member made last year, and the report which he, as Chairman of the Committee, brought up to the House. This is the

report:—
"The Committee to whom was referred the consideration of the question of the Pacific Islands annexation have the honour to recommend the House to approve of the steps taken up to this time by the Government, in conjunction with other of the Australian Colonies, to promote the establishment of British rule in certain islands in the Pacific, and consider that it is the duty of the British Government, under existing circumstances, to take steps for the establishment of its rule over all islands in the Pacific which are not already occupied by or under the protectorate of a foreign Power; and that, on annexation of any island taking place, care should be taken that provision be made for preserving the individual rights of the inhabitants; also that, in the event of the British Government making it one of the conditions of establishing its authority over any islands in the Pacific, it is hereby recommended that New Zealand, jointly with the Colonies of Australia, should contribute its fair proportion of necessary expense, calculated on the basis of European populations of the British colonies now comprised in Australasia: provided that the amount of such proportionate expenditure, when ascertained, does not exceed the means at the disposal of New Zealand."

The resolutions we propose, and which we are now told are to degrade New Zealand, are almost word for word with the report the honourable member brought up last year. How can we explain such conduct as this? He makes all

other members of the Ministry. I ask him to read his last year's speech and the report he brought up for the consideration of the House. How can he explain his inconsistent conduct? Why has he taken up this position? Is this the reason: that, if any person proposes anything that he does not propose, he will not support it? Sir, it looks very like that. did he say on the subject of federation last year? Why, he spoke in the warmest terms of what? Of the federation of the Empire? No; he wished to see an Anglo-Saxon federation in the Pacific. He was in favour of what the Government are now advocating. Let us turn to his own speech, and we shall find the following sentences :-

"I cannot bring myself to try to damp at once a great sympathy of this kind, which has arisen between the different colonies. It will awaken emulation between them; it will awaken in the minds of many of their people the desire of advancing in the course upon which they have entered—that is, a course of uniting together for great objects and to attain great ends—and I believe it may be the means of leading to a federation amongst them, which otherwise might not take place for a century." Has the honourable member forgotten that?

Then he goes on to say,

"Therefore I cannot bring myself to look quite coolly at the thing, and to say that New Zealand will bear no part in at least showing its sympathy with so great a movement as this, and in evincing a readiness to assist in any great movement which the whole of the Anglo-Saxon race in the Pacific determine to enter

upon at one time.

I am amazed at the honourable member. Can it be that, because he himself had not the carrying - out of this federation scheme, therefore it must be opposed? Surely a statesman should have some higher motive than that. The question of federation has been promoted by the honourable member for Egmont, and by an honourable member of the Legislative Council—Sir Frederick Whitaker and I think it cannot be the duty of a mem-ber of Parliament, or any Minister, simply to oppose any scheme because he does not make the proposal himself. I apprehend it is not the function of any man who calls himself a politician, and far less of a statesman, to get up in his place and make a speech in favour of any proposal, and in another session oppose it simply because he did not himself bring it forward. I venture to say that it is his duty to carry out such a proposal if he believes it is for the benefit of the people, whether it comes from his enemies or his friends. Now one word with regard to the speech of the honourable member for Wellington South. I am pleased with his speech; but he will allow me to say this: He also longed for the time when there shall be no war. But I do not believe in people longing for a thing and not doing some-thing to forward it. It is our duty to try to lay down the lines in such a way as to show that we, at all events, do not believe in war, sorts of insinuations against myself and the and are determined not to have war if we



can do anything to prevent it. We cannot do that by shutting ourselves up in a state of isolation from the rest of the Australian Colonies, or by neglecting our duty to the various Pacific Islands. We can best prevent war by showing amity—by showing sympathy —towards them, and a desire to work for them and with them in anything that is for the public good. That is why I feel so strongly on this question. I desire to see the best feelings cultivated between the different colonies, and I believe that we can set an example in that respect. Although we cannot say that in our time, or in that of our children, or our children's children, war will cease to be, we can have this consolation: that we have done what we could to lay the lines of peace for the great nations that will hereafter arise in the Pacific. Mr. SUTTER.—I believe the time is not far

distant when the federation spoken of must come about. This colony cannot remain in a state of isolation. Although we may postpone the question for a few years, more will be thought of it. The speeches made during this debate will lead the people of New Zealand to discuss the matter fairly and fully, and there will be a great agitation throughout the country upon it. It will be one of the main questions at the hustings, and members will have to

pledge themselves to support it.

Mr. MOSS.—I wish to ask a question of the Government, in order that the House may fairly understand the attitude of the Govern-ment in this matter. The Government have asked the House to express an opinion; but have they any opinion of their own? I understood the Premier, in the course of the eloquent remarks he made just now, to state in the strongest terms that the Government were anxious to bring about——
Mr. SPEAKER.—The honourable member is

not entitled to make a speech, having seconded

the amendment.

Mr. MOSS.—Well, I simply ask the question. Am I correct in understanding that the Government are anxious to bring about this federation?

Mr. STOUT.—I have already stated that I would not object to the amendment of the honourable member for Oamaru being carried; but I suggest that the word "Australasian" should be inserted before the word "Colonies." That would make the amendment more clear.

Mr. BEETHAM.—I cannot but express the great gratification I feel that the House has now taken the necessary steps to have this question fully discussed before the electorates of New Zealand. I have no doubt that in future a very different result will take place in the House when the question comes up again. I may state that I shall take the earliest opportunity next session of giving notice that it is expedient that this House should take every available step to insure the permanent federation of the Empire. I am quite convinced, from what I have seen in the Old Country-the views of public men and public journals there—in the Canadian Dominion, and various other colonies, that some such idea is gradually grow-

ing up in the minds of the English-speaking I shall just quote a resolution unanimously passed at a very important Conference held on the question of Imperial federation: "That, in order to secure the permanent unity of the Empire, some form of federation is essential." That was passed at a very important Conference held at the Westminster-Palace Hotel on the 29th July last. There were many leading men of the British Empire there—Sir Samuel Wilson, as representing Australia; Mr. Gisborne, as representing New Zealand; Lord Rosebery, Mr. Forster—who took avery important part in the debate—Lord Bury, Mr. Stanulph, the Marquis of Normanby— who warmly advocated federation—and many others. I have been glad to hear the speechesdelivered by the Premier, the Colonial Treasurer, and the honourable member for Egmont. I think it a very favourable sign that this House and the country will take its proper position eventually in the councils of the Empire. But I must say I was grievously disappointed in hearing the speech of the honourable member for Auckland East. It seems to me that he took exactly the course he should not have taken. He especially, who talks so much about the future interests of the inhabitants of New Zealand, should be one to preserve their interests by preventing the influx of criminals into these seas. The consideration of that question of the prevention of the influx of criminals would be one of the main objects of the proposed legalized Convention—for really it is that, and not a federation of the Australasian Colonies.

An Hon. Member.—We do not want an Act of the Imperial Parliament, to attain that.

Mr. BEETHAM.—I think we do. I will not keep the House longer, as I know honourable members are anxious to get away, and I shall make the speech I intended to make on this: subject when I move my resolution next session.

Mr. FISHER. -- I wish to say one or two words in explanation, in order to put myself right. The first and, as I think, the most objectionable resolution having been passed, I shall have no objection whatever to vote for

the first four subsections.

Sir G. GREY.—I wish to make a personal explanation. The Hon. the Premier quoted a report by me, but he forgot to state that, with the report, was a Bill so drafted that no annexation of any islands could take place unless the consent of the inhabitants had been obtained. That report must necessarily be read with the Bill which was sent up with it. I wish simply to point out that my objection to this proposal is that it will take all these islands without any negotiation or treaty with the people. I wanted to make just another explanation. It is that, if any one will read my speech, he will see it is confined to sympathy, and such dealings with the people as do not involve federation of the kind now proposed.

Motion for adjournment negatived.

Mr. STOUT moved, That this House approves of the steps taken by the British Government. [HOUSE.]

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for the establishment of its rule over New ·Guinea, and hopes that like measures will be taken for a protectorate over the islands of the Pacific Ocean not under the dominion of any stable Government.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. STOUT moved, That this House desires respectfully to protest against the transporta-tion of criminals to the French possessions in the Pacific.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. STOUT moved, That this House requests the British Government to make such representations to the European Powers as will prevent the maintenance of penal establishments in any of the Pacific Islands.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. STOUT. - Seeing the feeling of the House as expressed by the division, I think it only proper to say that the Government accept the amendment of the honourable member for Oamaru, instead of moving the remaining -clauses.

Mr. SHRIMSKI.—Then I beg to move, That, seeing the attitude taken by the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales respecting the Federal Council Bill, this House is of opinion that further negotiations should take place between the Australasian Colonies before the Federal Bill is enacted; and that further consideration of the question be postponed until next session of Parliament.

Mr. DUNCAN.—Would it not be better if the first portion of the resolution were left out? I should prefer it in the other form. I think we should not be dictated to by New South Wales or any other colony.

Mr. STOUT.—I think it better to pass the amendment in its present shape, because I think it is our duty, seeing the pledge given by our representatives at the Convention, that we should give a reason for our action.

Mr. MOSS.—We had no representative. Mr. STOUT.—Well, our delegates, then.

Mr. MOSS.—I am sorry to say that I, for one, must record my vote against the amendment. The honourable gentleman who has moved it has not told us what the Legislature of New South Wales has done. I do not know.

Mr. STOUT .-- "The previous question" was -carried by one vote in their Representative ·Chamber.

Sir G. GREY.—I propose to leave the matter as it is. I think we should not pass anything new, like this motion of the honourable member for Oamaru, without notice being given of it. I cannot vote for it in its present form. It takes me altogether by surprise. I apprehend it is a new motion, and I think it is one of which notice should have been given on a Supplementary Order Paper, or in some way. It takes honourable members altogether by surprise.

Mr. SHRIMSKI.—How could I have given notice? The House did not rise till one o'clock

on Sunday morning.
Sir G. GREY.—I beg the honourable gentleman's pardon: I am not blaming him per-

sonally; but I think opportunity should have been given to the House to consider it.

Mr. MOSS.—We have now gained a point so far that we have extracted from the Government a fact they have hitherto kept in the background—that they are in earnest in bringing about federation; that it is one of their objects. This is the first time we have known that. At first we were told the Government were neutral, and were perfectly willing to take the decision of the House. Now, I venture to say the Government know all about this resolution of the honourable member for Oamaru; that it has been framed by the Government; and I say, "Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes"-I give the Hon. the Premier a little Latin, for once. I say I am afraid of these resolutions being suddenly sprung upon us. At the first glance, they appear to me to mean this: They establish an honourable understanding that, if New South Wales can be brought into the federation, she will bring us with her.—(No.)-Yes; there is the true position. We virtually say by this resolution that, if New South Wales joins the federation, she will take us with her; and it will be held out now, as an inducement to New South Wales to go into the federation, that New Zealand depends upon her joining before she joins herself. Sir, I would only wish to remark on one point that has been touched upon, and that is with reference to a legalized Convention. We are told that this will not be a federal tie; that it is merely giving power to bring the colonies together for a conference. Now, there is no occasion whatever for a Bill of the Imperial Parliament to do that. Do not let us disguise from ourselves what it is that we are required to do. We are taking the first step towards entering into a federation by which we voluntarily deprive ourselves of the power of dealing with all the higher matters with which a nation can deal. We shall sit here as a local Legislature: that is what our true position will be. If this federation is accomplished, we cannot touch land tenure; we cannot touch immigration; we can take no steps to guard our-selves against the immigration of Chinese; we shall even be relieved of all care of our own defence, which is one of the highest functions of a Government; we shall have federal Supreme Courts. Do not let us disguise from ourselves that this is the inevitable result of the measure. A Federal Council would be a farce if it merely meant to talk of and initiate legislation. No: that Federal Council, with the powers it will obtain under the Imperial Act, will and must become a Government—a federal Legislature; and, as a federal Government, it must take from us all the higher functions with which we now deal: it must degrade this Legislature into a mere local Legislature; and I venture to say that, whenever that comes, we shall have more than one local Legislature under that federal Govern-It would be utterly impossible that one local Legislature should, under such circumstances, deal with the multifarious questions in New Zealand. Do not let us conceal this



from ourselves; do not let the Government drag us step by step into it; but let us resist it from the first, and let us have it clearly understood that we will continue to be New Zealanders, in alliance with and subject to the Queen of England; but that we do not wish to join Federal Australasia, because we can have little or no influence in its counsels; because we are too far removed from them; because they are interested in numbers of questions, concerning race, land tenure, and other matters, with which we cannot deal; and also because, if there is to be a navy, a New Zealand navy would be far better, if at at some future time it should be necessary to protect our shores, to protect us than we could possibly be protected by an Australian navy which had the whole of Australia to protect, and with its head-quarters on that continent. The question is, I feel, the most momentous one we can have before us; and I think the course taken, when bringing it before the House, is highly objectionable. I think it should have been more deliberately brought before the House, and that the Government is seeking, by ruses of various kinds, to force it through the House. The last intimation that was given by the Hon. the Premier is that the "Te Anau" will sail punctually, so that those honourable gentlemen who want to get to the races and to see the Canterbury Show, if they do not settle this question quickly, will lose their chance of doing so. I say such conduct as that ought not to be tolerated, and that we ought to insist upon having sufficient time to come to a conclusion, and that the whole thing should be left over until next session. I will move the amendment of which I gave notice on the Supplementary Order Paper No. 26,-That the following be substituted for the subclauses marked (e), (f), and (g): "That, while rejoicing in the prospect of a federal union among the colonies of the Australian Continent, this House is of opinion that the distance of New Zealand, her insular position, and the homogeneous character of her population, render it desirable that no step should be taken to include her in such federation until the federal policy with reference to the Customs tariff, to the immigration and employment of uncivilized races as labourers, and to other matters affecting the future well-being and happiness of her people, shall be known and settled." I beg to move that amendment to the resolutions. There can be no doubt this is a definite answer to the question, and will state the opinion of the House upon it.

Mr. GUINNESS.—I have much pleasure in

seconding the amendment.

Mr. HATCH.—I object to the first few words of the motion of the honourable member for Oamaru. I would rather state that it is not in consequence at all of the action taken by New South Wales. I maintain that it is in consequence of the action taken by the Imperial Government in, a few days ago, stating that they required the amount of subsidy to be doubled. That, Sir, is exactly the position of affairs, and it will be a great deal better to

state the true position than to tack ourselves on to New South Wales, a colony which is at variance to a great extent with Victoria, jea-lousies between which colonies, as has been pointed out by the honourable member for Egmont in his speech, have been rife for a number of years. I hope the honourable member for Oamaru will see fit to leave out these words of his resolution, and I do not think there will then be any objection to carrying it without any loss of time. I propose to substitute the words, "That, consequent upon the uncertain. position taken up by the Imperial Govern-ment in doubling the amount of the subsidy."

Mr. GILLIES.—I desire to move an amendment, That all the words from "That" to "this" be left out. It will have very much the same effect as the honourable member for Oamaru's motion, giving the reason why this is done. My reason here is simply this: that the reason given is not the reason why we are adjourning: it, and I think it is unworthy of us to state as

a reason that which is not a reason. Sir G. GREY.—There will be a necessity for further amendments in the latter part of theclause. The clear meaning of this is that the Bill might be enacted by the British Parliament, after negotiations have taken place, without our knowing anything about it. Some words should be put in which would clearly define that nothing shall be done until this Parliament meets again.

Mr. Gillies's amendment agreed to. Mr. Moss's amendment negatived.

Major ATKINSON moved, That the question be further amended by the omission of the words "before the Federal Bill is enacted," and the insertion of the words "with regard to federation" in lieu thereof.

The House divided on the question, "That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of

the question.'

AYES, 16.

Macandrew Tole Brown Bruce Moss Turnbull. Duncan Richardson, E. Fisher Ross Tellers. Guinness Samuel Smith Stewart, W. D. Trimble. Johnston

Noes, 35.

Ballance Hatch Shephard Beetham Lake Shrimski Steward, W.J. Larnach Bevan Conolly Locke Stout Cowan McKenzie, J. Sutter Vogel Dodson Moat Fraser Morris Wakefield Walker Fulton Newman White, W. Garrick Peacock Gillies Tellers. Richardson, G. Atkinson Grey Fitzherbert. Hakuene Rolleston

Majority against, 19.

Words struck out.

Words "with regard to federation" added... Motion, as amended, agreed to.

The House went into Committee to consider the following resolution: "(b.) That this colony is willing to pay, in proportion to its population, a share of the sum of £15,000 proposed by the Imperial Government."

Mr. STOUT moved, That the word "first" inserted immediately after the figures

" £15,000."

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Agreed to.

Resolution, as amended, agreed to. Dr. NEWMAN.—I should like to learn from the Premier if he has worked out, on the basis of population, what our contribution is likely to be.

Mr. STOUT. - It will be about a sixth or

seventh.

Resolution reported.

On the question, That the resolution be

agreed to by the House,

Mr. GUINNESS said, - I shall most distinctly take a division on this question. have all along opposed spending a penny of money on this matter, and I ask honourable gentlemen to vote against it, so as to show the country which members are doing their duty in this respect—who are carrying out their election pledges and who are not, in supporting an appropriation like this.

Resolution agreed to.

### SUPPLY BILLS.

Mr. SPEAKER announced that he had, in person, presented to His Excellency the Governor two Supply Bills, which His Excellency. had assented to, on behalf of Her Majesty.

### BUSINESS OF THE SESSION.

Mr. SPEAKER laid on the table the following schedule of the business transacted during the session :-

1. SELECT COMMITTEES	_					
On public matters				6		
On private Bills	•••			4		
	•••	•••	•••	_	10	
2. STANDING COMMITTE	E8		•••	12		
Ditto on private Bil	ls	•••		8		
•				_	15	
					_	2
3. Public Bills-						
Originated in the He	ouse					
Received the Roys		66				
Reserved for the	signif	cation	of			
Her Majesty's pl				0		
Dropped or other			lo f	69		
				_	185	
Brought from the Co	ouncil	_				
Received the Roya	al asso	nt		19		
Reserved for the	of					
Her Majesty's p	leasur	е		0		
Dropped or other	wise d	ispose	d of	1		
		_		_	13	
					_	140

4. PRIVATE BILLS— Originated in the H Received the Roy Dropped or other	al asse wise di		d öf	4 1 - 8
5. PETITIONS PRESENTS From Europeans	<b>ID</b> —			447
From Maoris	•••	***	•••	115
6. Divisions— In the whole House In Committee	·	•••	•••	569 55 100
7. BITTINGS-				155
Days of meeting	•••	•••	•••	#6
Hours of sitting	•••	•••	•••	. 376
Daily average	•••	•••	•••	6h. 42m.
8. VOTES AND PROCESS Questions asked of Entries in Journals Daily average	Minist		: 	559 1,085 —— 1,687 99
9. ORDERS FOR PAPERS	3		•••	60
10. Papers Laid upon a By command In return to Orders	•••	ABLE-		36 55
In return to addres		•••	•••	Õ
By message	•••	•••	•••	Ō
By Act By leave		•••	•••	18
Papers ordered to be Papers not ordered	e prin to be p	ted rinte	74 1 50	13
				1 <b>94</b>
11. REPORTS FROM SELL From the Public Pe tee From the Native Af From the Waste Le From the Gold Fi Committee From the Local Bi From other Comm	fairs Cands Cands Calds a	ommi ommi ommi nd M	mit-  ttee ttee ines	190 41 96 30 99 41

## PROROGATION.

A message was brought by LEONARD STOWE, Esq., Clerk of the Legislative Council, to the following effect: "The Commissioners ap pointed by His Excellency the Governor to do all things in his name in order to the proroguing of this Parliament, request the attendance in the Legislative Council Chamber of the members of this honourable House to hear the Commission read."

Accordingly, Mr. SPEAKER, with the House, went to the Legislative Council Chamber; and a Commission was read for the proroguing of

Parliament.

The Hon. the SPEAKER of the Legislative Council, one of the Commissioners, said,—By virtue of His Excellency's Commission, under the seal of the colony, to us directed, and read, we do, in His Excellency's name and in obedience to his command, prorogue this session of the General Assembly to the 19th day of March, 1885; and this session of the General Assembly is prorogued accordingly to Thursday, the 19th day of March, 1885.

# APPENDIX.

NATIVE LAND SETTLEMENT BILL.

The following petition was presented to the
House of Representatives in relation to the
above Bill:—

"Poneke, Oketopa 13, 1884.

Ke te Tumuaki Honore me nga mema o te
Whare o Raro e noho huihui ana i roto i te
Paremata.

46 Ko te pitihana a nga kai tuhi e mau nei i raro nga ingoa, e ata whakaatu ana,—

44 Ko a koutou kai pitihana he tangata no te iwi Maori, kua mohio, tenei etehi Pire taimaha e pa mai ana ki a matou tenei kei mua i te Paremata. E tino hiahia ana matou kia whakamohiotia ki to koutou Whare honore nga tikanga e paingia ana e o matou iwi tae noa ki nga mea e whakapouri nei i a ratou, a, ko aua iwi kua kiia ake nei kia tino manakohia mai e to koutou Tino Whakaminenga.

"E ata tono atu ana tenei kia karangatia mai e koutou a Wahanui kia tu ki te aroaro to koutou Whare honore, ki reira whakaatu ai i nga hiahia me nga whakaaro o tona iwi mo arunga i a koutou ture e mea nei kia hanga

inaianei.

"A ko a koutou kai pitihana i runga i te ritenga tika ka tono tonu atu.

" Meiha Keepa Rangihiwinui.

" Atanatiu te Kairangi.

"Rene te Ouenuku.

" Hoani Ruru.

"Tamihana te Huirau.

" Ihaka Hakuene.

"Wi Pewhairangi.

"Paora Parau." Enoka te Taitea.

"Wi Pihana.

"Puke te Ao.

"Wi Pere.

"John Ormsby (Hone Omipi).

"Maaka Pukehi.

" Raureti Ngawhena.

"Wiremu Katene.

"Raniera te Hiahia. "Taare Weteri te Kaahu.

" Mautoko.

"Rawenata."

## [Translation.]

"Wellington, 18th October, 1884.
"To the Honourable the Speaker and the members of the House of Representatives, in Parliament assembled.

4 The humble petition of the undersigned respectfully showeth.—

46 THAT your petitioners are persons of the

Native race, who, perceiving that many Bills seriously affecting them are now before Parliament, and being desirous that your honourable House should receive the fullest information as to the requirements and grievances of our people, and also that the said people should receive the fullest consideration from the General Assembly, respectfully pray that you will call Wahanui, the chief of the Ngatimaniapoto, to appear before your honourable House, there to make known the wants and desires of his people in respect of the now proposed laws.

"And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.
"MEIHA KEEPA RANGIHIWINUI.

"ATANATIU TE KAIRANGI."
[And 18 others.]

The following address was delivered at the bar of the House on the 1st November, 1884:—

Mr. WAHANUI.—Mr. Speaker, salutations to you. To all the honourable members of this House, salutations. It was my great desire to speak before this House on behalf of my people. That brough me here. There are two subjects for which 1 was sent here. My first reason was to explain to you my sentiments; my second, that I might look upon the works that are being done in this House. I will now speak the wishes and the words of my tribe. The first subject on which I shall speak concerns our lands—the ancestral lands of myself and my people. I say that we wish to have the sole administration of those lands. Secondly, I do not wish the action of the Native Land Court to be brought into force over those lands. The reason of this request is, that the lands that I speak of are ancestral lands, and the hands of the Europeans have never touched them. No white man's foot has trodden upon those lands, nor has any European obtained authority over them, either by lease or other-This is the reason why I say that we should have the administration of those lands; but afterwards I will ask this House to help me to devise a law for administering them. have already mentioned my ideas on this subject to the Native Minister. His word to me was, "Your ideas are good." After I had been in this place some time, I saw the proposed Bill. When I saw this Bill I found that it had great sharp teeth from the head to the mouth, and there was a sting also in its tail. I saw that its teeth were very sharp, and were designed to swallow up the people, and that the sting also will destroy the land. When I saw those sharp teeth I thought in this way:

This watch which I hold in my hand is mine; and, if it require repairs, let me take it to the watchmaker and have it repaired. I will explain to the watchmaker what requires to be done to it, and then he can repair it according to my directions. Then, when he has repaired it, he returns it to me, and I pay him for it, and then it is mine to do what I please with. I apply this idea to my land, and I think it is a parallel case to my land. I hope that the House will duly consider my words. Do not let the House be carried away with a desire to obtain lands, but rather let the House consider that which is just and right. These are my ideas on this subject, and since I have seen the Bill I asked the Native Minister if he would consent to my inserting some provisions. At present there is no embarrassment with reard to my land; the title to it is undisputed. But I am actuated by a fear that trouble will come upon it. That is why I come here now. The object of Tawhiao's visit to England was lest the laws passed in this House should injuriously affect his land, and it has been the head of the Government in England that has told Tawhiao to come back to New Zealand.

Therefore I ask this House to pass just laws with regard to my land. I hope, also, that this House will carefully consider, carry out, and give effect to the laws of that great lady who lives in England — I mean the Queen so that the laws for both races, the Natives and Europeans, may be carefully administered. Do not let such laws as some of the clauses in this proposed Bill be affirmed. They appear to have been drafted, or designed, without due These are my words to this consideration. House: I claim the consideration of this House, and ask it to give effect to my wish and the wish of my people, and that the authority over our lands may be vested in our Committee. Another request I have to make is that the sale of spirits within our district shall be stopped absolutely. I do not want that great evil brought upon our people. I hope this House will be strong in preventing this evil coming upon us and upon our people. That is all I have to say, and I can only add that it is my great desire and wish that you pass just laws with respect to my land and my people.

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